HELION WARGAMES 14

# BUSHIDAN

## MINIATURES RULES FOR SMALL-UNIT WARFARE IN JAPAN, 1543 TO 1615 AD

PAULI KIDD

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## Pauli Kidd

> After victory, tighten the cords of your helmet.
>
> *Tokugawa Ieyasu*

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COMPANY

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# 1

# Introduction

> In the cold wind at sunset, long drawn-out cries of hawks
> foretell the heads to fall in tomorrow's battle.
>
> *Matsuo Bashu*, 1644–1694

A mighty champion wearing a grotesque a "Nio Dou" armour. (Perry Miniatures)

The Bushidan rules are designed to reflect the small-scale battles that were so endemic in sixteenth century Japan. They thus concentrate upon the small unit tactics that developed, particularly those in response to the adoption of firearms and the abandonment of horse archer tactics in favour of infantry.

The rules are intended for use with 28mm figures but can easily be played with smaller scales. A typical unit will be from 4 to 16 figures and a typical force might have eight or nine units. Setting up to play 'Bushidan' is therefore not too expensive – particularly with the arrival of good plastic figures on the market.

The later Sengoku period is the era of warfare depicted in classical Japanese movies such as 'The Seven Samurai', 'Ran', 'Kagemusha' – a colourful period that has a very distinct difference to the arms, equipment, tactics and culture seen in Europe at the time.

## Basing

Each figure is an abstract representation of five or six men. The basic piece moved in the game is a 'base' – an oblong template on which we set four infantry, or three cavalry. The following base sizes are suggested, but as long as all players are using similarly sized bases, you may feel free to use whatever basing suits your games group.

A standard base for 28mm figures is 100mm wide by 40mm deep (or *c.* 60mm deep for cavalry).

For 15mm figures, unit basing can be reduced to 40mm wide by 20mm deep (or 30mm deep for cavalry).

Commanders-in-Chief are mounted on a circular base *c.* 60mm in diameter (or larger if you have a most excellent diorama idea in mind). This should hold a figure for the C-in-C and two to three other figures – standard bearers, messengers or bodyguards.

With 15mm figures you can reduce their Commander-in-Chief base size to *c.* 40mm diameter.

Leaders are mounted on a circular base 50mm across. This should hold two figures – one leader and one bodyguard, herald, or standard bearer.

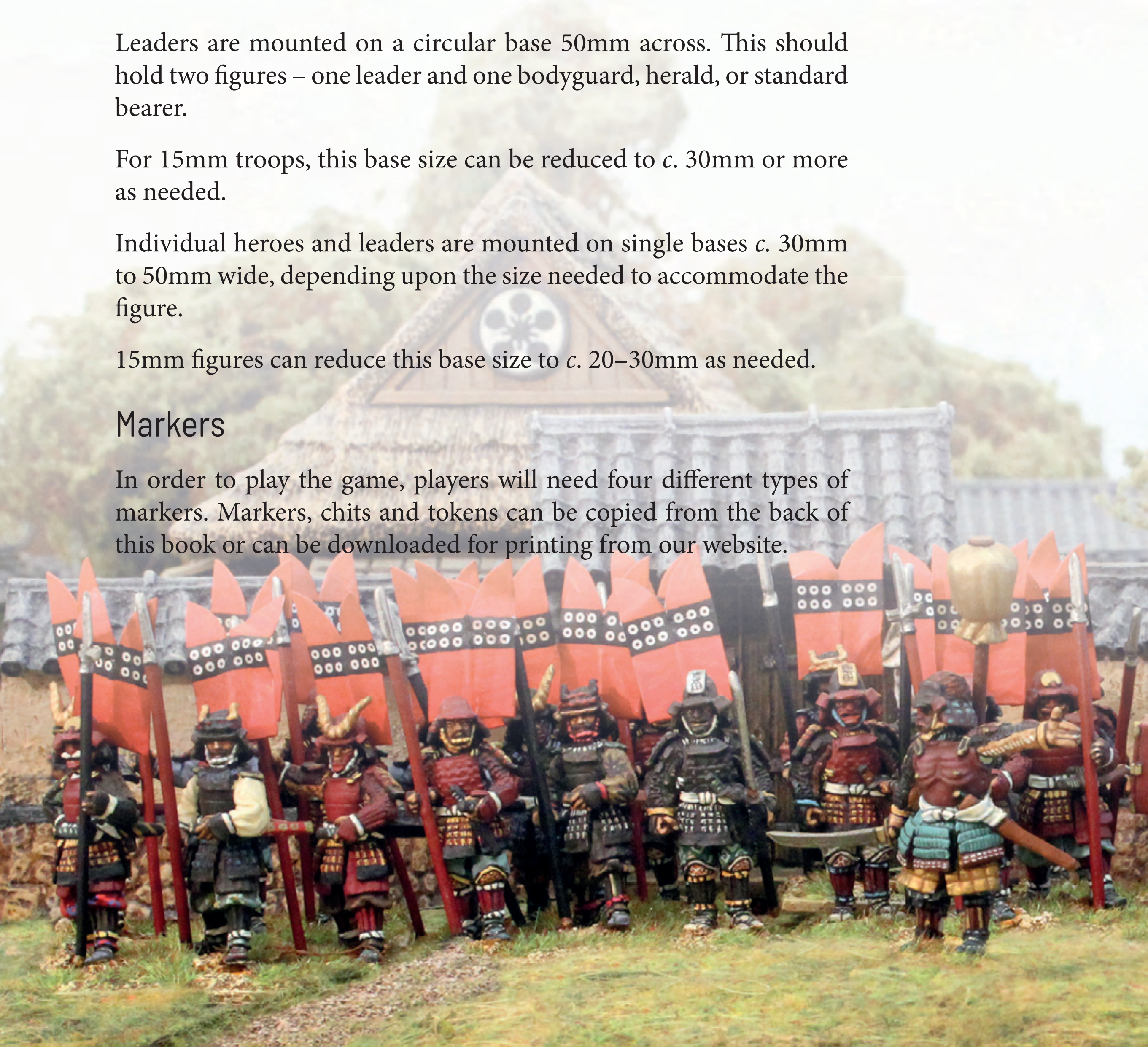
For 15mm troops, this base size can be reduced to *c.* 30mm or more as needed.

Individual heroes and leaders are mounted on single bases *c.* 30mm to 50mm wide, depending upon the size needed to accommodate the figure.

15mm figures can reduce this base size to *c.* 20–30mm as needed.

## Markers

In order to play the game, players will need four different types of markers. Markers, chits and tokens can be copied from the back of this book or can be downloaded for printing from our website.



## Order Chits

These are marked with the six Japanese magical elements of fire, forest, earth, wind, water and metal. The 'metal' element is not used for issuing orders, but instead records the Bushidan's endurance.

## Victory Tokens

These can be either pre-printed tokens, or coins/tokens of any type desired.

## Disorder Markers

These can be counters, or bases that designate 'disorder' – such as smoke, abandoned weapons, banners and sashimono.

## Casualty Markers

These can either be counters, or miniatures depicting casualties. There are commercial bases that have a numbered wheel to indicate casualty numbers that can be useful, or there can be a place for a small black dice on the base that is used to indicate casualty numbers.

## Movement

All movement in the game is measured by the number of 'Distance Units' or D.U.s. One D.U. is equal to half a base width. Premade measuring devices can be found in the back of this book and can be downloaded from this website.

Readying for action. *Tanegashima* troops receive a swift resupply of ammunition. (Perry Miniatures)

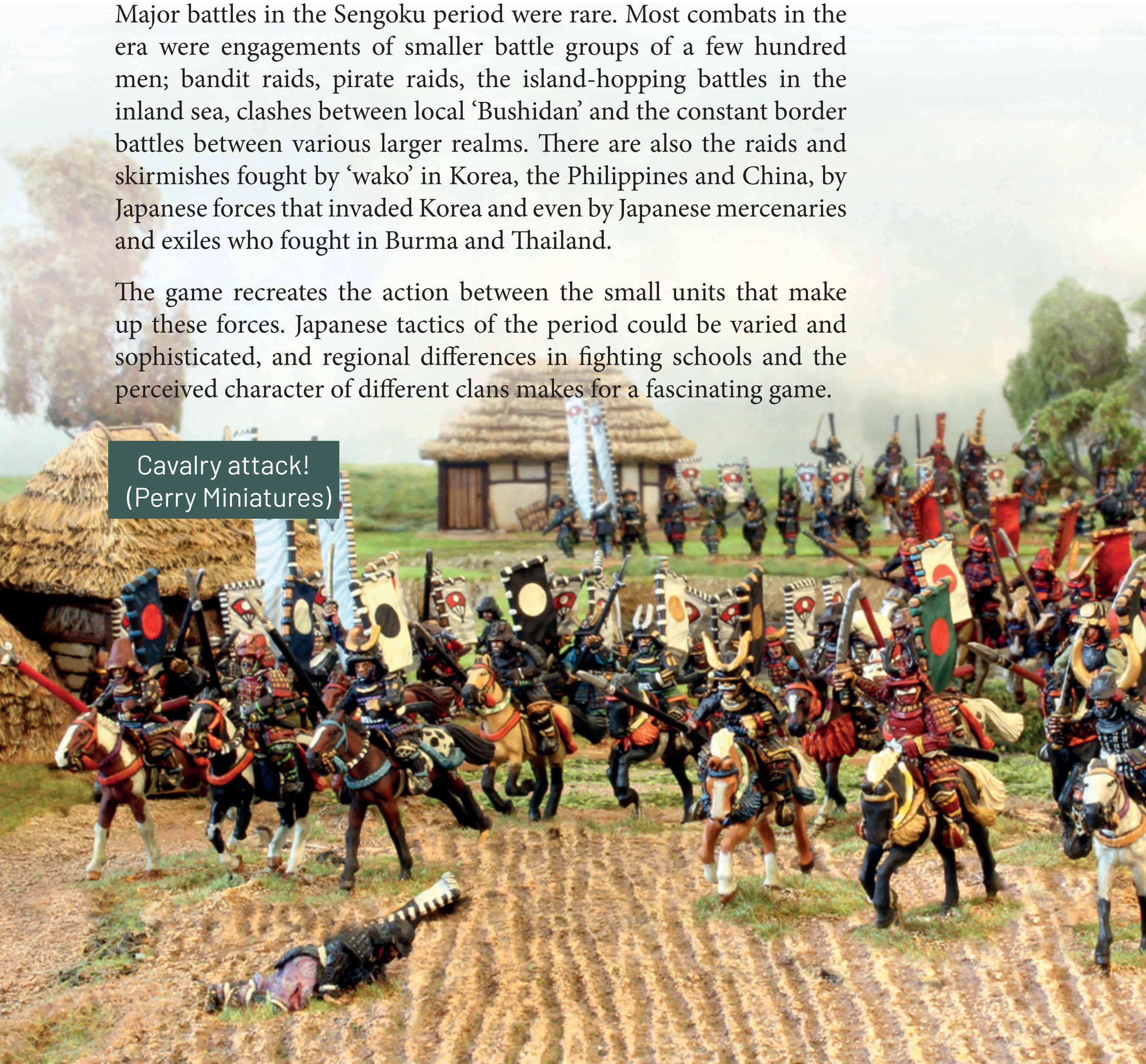
# About the Game

‘Bushidan’ simulates land battles between small forces during the later Sengoku period of Japan. It is an age of armoured samurai and ashigaru, of troops armed with spears and matchlock firearms – and of constant war.

The game has distinctively Japanese elements to it, grounded in the military manuals and the traditions that survive in various ‘kobudo’ (the revered, oldest schools of martial arts).

Major battles in the Sengoku period were rare. Most combats in the era were engagements of smaller battle groups of a few hundred men; bandit raids, pirate raids, the island-hopping battles in the inland sea, clashes between local ‘Bushidan’ and the constant border battles between various larger realms. There are also the raids and skirmishes fought by ‘wako’ in Korea, the Philippines and China, by Japanese forces that invaded Korea and even by Japanese mercenaries and exiles who fought in Burma and Thailand.

The game recreates the action between the small units that make up these forces. Japanese tactics of the period could be varied and sophisticated, and regional differences in fighting schools and the perceived character of different clans makes for a fascinating game.



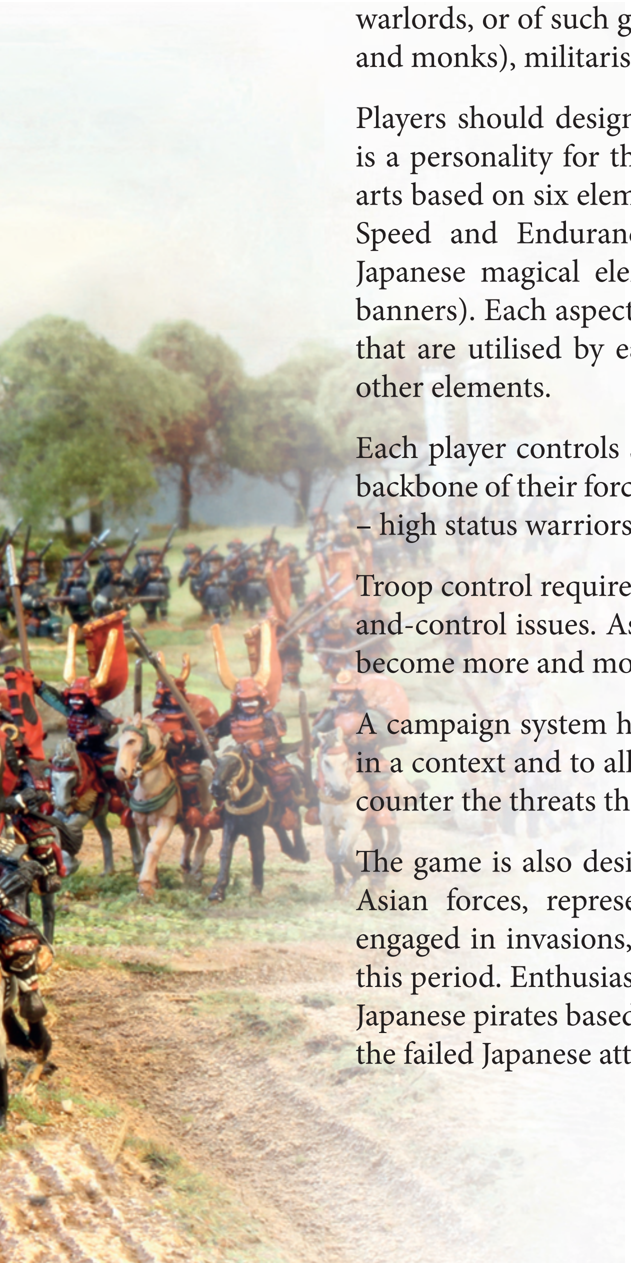
Cavalry attack!
(Perry Miniatures)

‘If a cuckoo does not sing – kill it!’: *Oda Nobunaga*

‘If the cuckoo does not sing – make it sing!’: *Toyotomi Hideyoshi*

‘If the cuckoo does not sing – wait’: *Tokugawa Ieyasu*

The song of the three warlords (traditional).



Each player controls the units of a ‘Bushidan’. This was a regional association, alliance, or family-controlled group of warriors. These can represent the forces of small warlords, of retainers of larger warlords, or of such groups as Ikki (‘collectives’ of samurai, peasants and monks), militarised temples, pirates, or bandit groups.

Players should design a ‘ryu’ or character for their Bushidan. This is a personality for their group and region’s military traditions and arts based on six elements: Ferocity, Discipline, Prudence, Cunning, Speed and Endurance. These each correspond to a traditional Japanese magical element (famously preserved on some military banners). Each aspect has its own effects upon the small unit tactics that are utilised by each army. Elements also help counter certain other elements.

Each player controls small units of troops – ‘kumi’ – that form the backbone of their forces. They may also control individual characters – high status warriors and leaders.

Troop control requires a player to carefully manage their command-and-control issues. As troops encounter enemy fire and melee, they become more and more difficult to control.

A campaign system has been included, to allow battles to be placed in a context and to allow armies to adapt their ‘ryu’ and structure to counter the threats that they face.

The game is also designed to allow use of Korean, Ming and other Asian forces, representing those regions where Japanese troops engaged in invasions, raids and conflicts with other nations during this period. Enthusiasts could even fight out the clashes between the Japanese pirates based in the Philippines and the Spanish in 1582, or the failed Japanese attempt to conquer Korea!

## Winning the Game

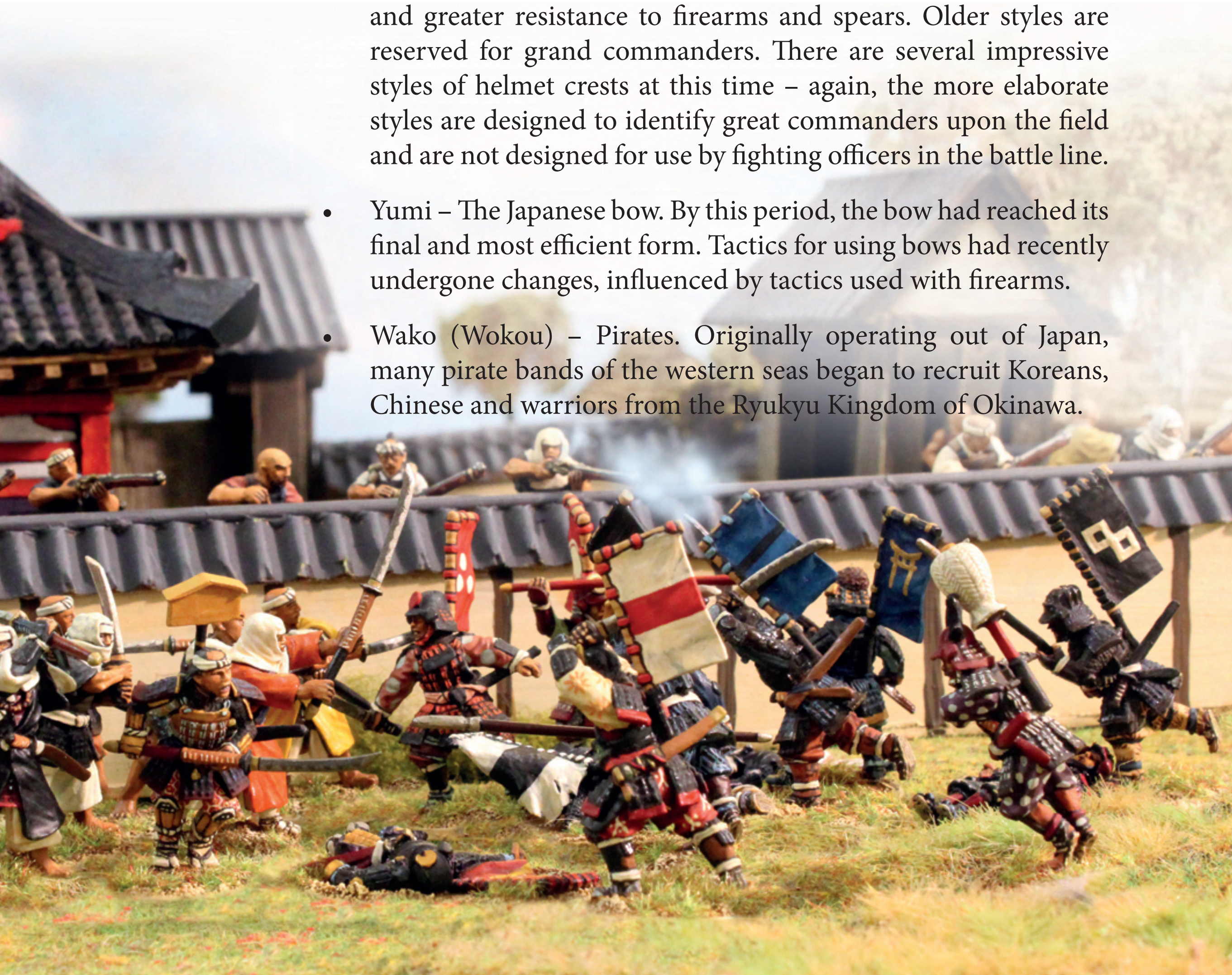
At the start of each game, each player receives a number of 'victory tokens'. The number of these tokens is determined by their force composition. As a Bushidan takes reverses, its store of victory tokens is whittled away. When a force expends its last victory token, it has lost the battle and withdraws.

## Terms

- Bushidan – An association or collection of warriors.
- Kanabo – A heavy two-handed club. Heavy to use, but a formidable weapon for defeating armour.
- Kumi – a small tactical unit or platoon.
- Hata-jisushi – Standard attached to the shaft by a horizontal cross-piece. One version has a cross bar attached at 90 degrees to the shaft, while another version has a streamer-like banner hanging from a suspended cross bar.
- Mon – A heraldic symbol that denotes a family or clan.
- Naginata – A polearm consisting of a long, slightly curved blade upon a pole. Once the standard infantry weapon of Japan, it has recently been supplanted by the yari.
- Nobori – A style of banner. These are long, narrow flags, attached to a pole with a cross-rod to hold the fabric straight out and prevent it from furling around the rod; this way, the field is always visible and identifiable.
- O-dachi – An oversized sword. Powerful, but somewhat clumsy.
- Sahimono – Flags attached to the backs of armour. In an age of mixed and varied armour styles, they were used to create a sense of uniformity in military units. While most sashimono carry a family 'mon' or slogan, others can bear personal devices, scriptures and images.

Fierce fighting about a temple compound. (Perry Miniatures)

- Tanegashima – The term for a muzzle-loading matchlock firearm. The name comes from the island where Portuguese guns first arrived in Japan. There are several different kinds of tanegashima in use at this period.
- Tetsubo – A long iron club, often studded with spikes. They are extremely good at damaging armoured targets but can be slow and clumsy to use.
- Yari – The spear. Some have side branches, hooks, blades and parrying lugs. Some had longer blades designed to be more resistant against swords. They are the dominant weapon of hand-to-hand combat. In the field, most warriors would use a sword only if their spear had been broken.
- Yoroi – Armour. By the later Sengoku period, armours are being made in simplified, strong styles designed for swift production and greater resistance to firearms and spears. Older styles are reserved for grand commanders. There are several impressive styles of helmet crests at this time – again, the more elaborate styles are designed to identify great commanders upon the field and are not designed for use by fighting officers in the battle line.
- Yumi – The Japanese bow. By this period, the bow had reached its final and most efficient form. Tactics for using bows had recently undergone changes, influenced by tactics used with firearms.
- Wako (Wokou) – Pirates. Originally operating out of Japan, many pirate bands of the western seas began to recruit Koreans, Chinese and warriors from the Ryukyu Kingdom of Okinawa.



## Slightly more diverse than advertised!

### Female Warriors of the Era

Miniatures painters will be pleased to know that female characters were prominent as heroes and leaders during this period. Here are tales of just a few:

- *Ōhōri Tsuruhime*: The island campaigns of the inner seas in the 1540s saw the Kono clan come under the leadership of Ōhōri Tsuruhime. This 15-year-old girl led her clan onward to such victories against the Ouchi clan that she was declared to be the physical avatar of Ôyamatsumi, the god of oceans and of war. Her slender, blue-laced armour is on display at the Ôyamatsumi shrine on the sacred island of Omishima.
- *Akai Teruko*: This female samurai fought in battles all through her life, rising to command an army of 3,000 troops. Her family were patronised by an 'Inari' fox spirit, who leant strength and cunning to the family line. She was greatly admired by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who rewarded her with a territory of 5,435 koku and overlordship of Ushiki castle. Teruko was still fighting hand-to-hand in the field past the age of 76 and was honoured as 'The Strongest Woman in Japan'.
- *Ikeda Sen*: In the year 1583, the female warrior Ikeda Sen led a troop of 200 women armed with firearms at the battles of Yamazaki and again year later at Komaki and Nagakute. She may well have led the same troops into the battle of Sekigahara, fighting in the Tokugawa ranks. Sen became a daimyo in her own right, with a fief of more than 10,000 koku. She died at more than 80 years of age, having survived the entire warring states period.

### Trans, Bisexual and Gay Samurai:

Transexual, cross dressing and pansexual lifestyles were common. Bisexuality was seen a most natural and desirable state. Many warlords and warriors had faithful battle retainers that were also their male or transsexual lovers. A brief list of celebrities with such lifelong companions include Tokugawa Ieyasu, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Oda Nobunaga, Takeda Shingen, Uesgi Kenshin… And even our old pal Miyamoto Musashi

So, if a C-in-C is accompanied by a female samurai, or a page, or a samurai that has elements of both male and female dress or hairstyle – it is all par for the course.

## 'Kirishitan' Samurai

The Portuguese brought Christianity to Japan. The Jesuit order specifically targeted influential nobles and as a result converted several daimyo to Christianity. Over the years, resentment against Christian hostility to local religious institutions began to grow. In 1614, Christianity was suppressed by the shogunate, with many Christian Japanese fleeing to Manilla and Siam.

*Takayama Ukon*: The Takayama were vassals of the Waka clan. Takayama Ukon (also known as Dom Justo Takayama) and his father were baptised as Christians. They began to gain a reputation for military skill. Jealous of their reputation, the head of the Waka clan invited the Takayama leaders to a banquet and then attempted to assassinate them. The Takayama cut their way free, injuring their treacherous lord. Oda Nobunaga, the Waka's overlord, was deeply impressed by Ukon's actions. The Waka castle and lands were given to Ukon, who served Nobunaga during his campaigns to unite Japan. The Yamada family eventually dominated the Takatsuki and Akashi regions, where they pursued a ruthless Christianisation programme and destroyed numerous Buddhist and Shinto shrines: When the Tokugawa shogunate declared the expulsion of all Christians in 1614, the Takayama lord obeyed the order, renounced his fief and honours and went into exile in Manilla. Takayama Ukon was made a saint of the Catholic church in 2017.

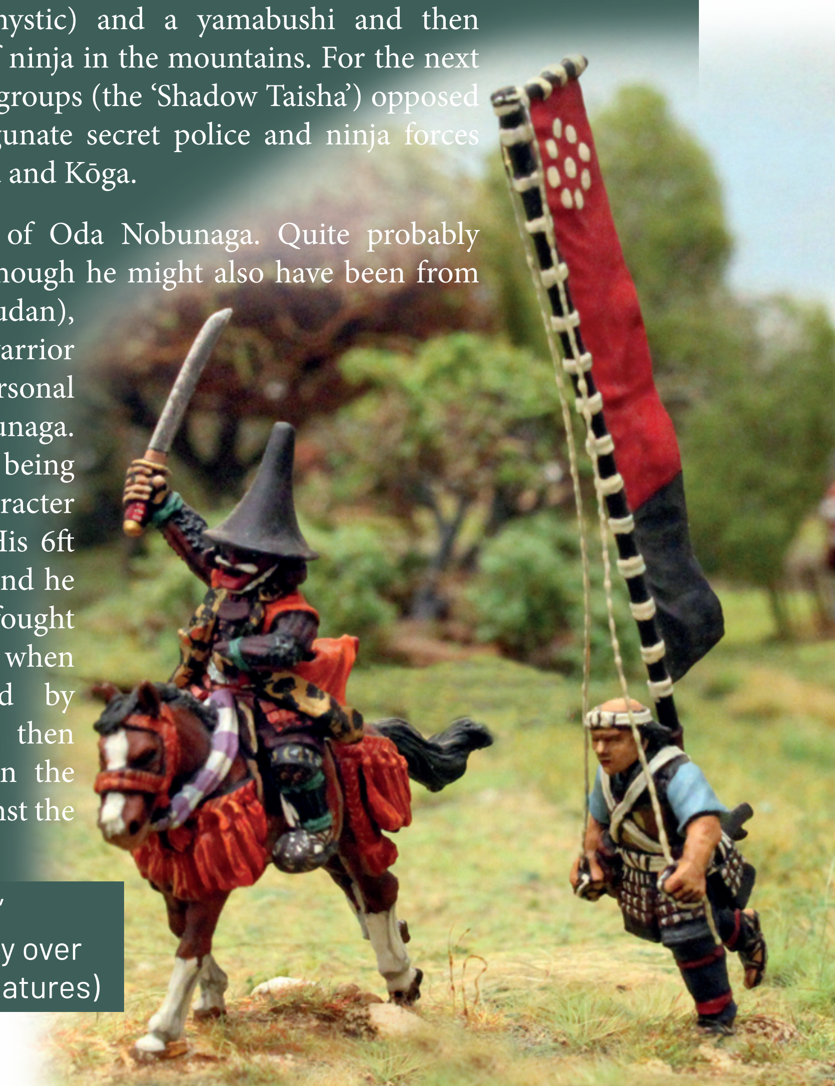
## Foreign-born Warriors

There were a number of samurai who were of Korean or Ming origin. There were even a few Europeans. While the European samurai seem to have been well away from battles of the era, some other foreign-born samurai were in the thick of the action. A few colourful examples include:

- *Rinoie Motohiro*: A Korean from the Yi clan who was captured during the Imjin war and brought to Japan. His skills as an adviser, strategist and swordsman brought him into the Mori clan as a valued retainer. A famously skilled swordsman, Motohiro received the menkyo (reception of total knowledge and spirit) of the Yagyū Shinkage-ryū and received the teacher's personal weapons as a gift when the great master died.

- *Denrinbō Raikei*: Also known as Benkei Musō, Denrinbō Raikei was a Chinese martial artist who travelled to Japan. He became a famous master swordsman and master ninja. On arrival in Japan, he fought a duel with Oda 'Rokuemon' Sekika. Oda Sekika was the disciple of Marume Nagayoshi a renowned swordsman and the founder of Taisha-ryū. Raikei was defeated by Sekika and became Nagayoshi's disciple. He received menkyo and became the master teaching ninjutsu in the Taisha-ryū. Raikei became a shugenja (mountain mystic) and a yamabushi and then established secret corps of ninja in the mountains. For the next few centuries, these ninja groups (the 'Shadow Taisha') opposed the machinations of shogunate secret police and ninja forces such as the Yagyū clan, Iga and Kōga.

- *Yasuke*: A loyal retainer of Oda Nobunaga. Quite probably born in Mozambique (although he might also have been from either Ethiopia or the Sudan), he became a faithful warrior of the Oda and the personal sword-bearer of Oda Nobunaga. Yasuke was described as being well educated, of fine character and as 'black as a bull'. His 6ft 2in height was daunting and he was a skilled fighter. He fought to defend Oda Nobunaga when Nobunaga was betrayed by Akechi Mitsuhide. He then joined Nobunaga's heir in the defence of Nijo castle against the Akechi army.



"Forward, Kato!"
An exercise in visibility over practicality. (Perry Miniatures)

# 2

# Ryu

> Mountain and Sea Changing
>
> 'Mountain and sea' means that it is bad to do the same thing over and over again. You may have to repeat something once, but it should not be done a third time. When you try something on an opponent, if it does not work the first time, you will not get any benefit out of rushing to do it again. Change your tactics abruptly, doing something completely different. If that still does not work, then try something else. Thus, the science of martial arts involves the presence of mind to act as the sea when the enemy is like a mountain and act as a mountain when the enemy is like a sea. This requires careful reflection.
>
> *Miyamoto Musashi*,
>
> The Book of Five Rings, 1645

## Designing Your 'Ryu'

Every Bushidan must design its 'ryu' – its local combat style that is used and shared by its members. It also reflects the battle philosophy and personality of its troops. The 'ryu' is created by splitting a starting base number of 12 points between the following characteristics. Each characteristic coincides with a material element. Characteristics may be given a value between zero and five. The exception is 'endurance' (metal), which must have a value of at least one.

- *Ferocity (Fire element)* – Fire has an advantage against Wood (prudence) and is vulnerable to Water (cunning). The fanatical power and strength of the ryu. Ferocious troops commit to raging charges and assaults and strike with great strength. They are also rash and easy to provoke.

- *Prudence (Wood element)* – Wood has an advantage against earth (discipline) and is vulnerable to fire (ferocity). Prudent forces guard their flanks and rear and have good scouts and intelligence. They tend not to act rashly – and are therefore hard to fool into undertaking wasteful attacks.
- *Discipline (Earth element)* – Earth has an advantage against Wind (speed) and is vulnerable to Wood (prudence). Disciplined troops rely upon drill and formation to give them an edge in battle. They are relentless, but their serried movements can lack initiative.
- *Speed (Wind element)* – Wind has an advantage against Water (cunning) and is vulnerable to Earth (discipline). Swift troops rely upon speed of manoeuvre in order to strike swiftly and where least expected. This often comes at the cost of coordination and formation.

- *Cunning (Water element)* – Cunning has an advantage against Fire (ferocity) and is vulnerable to Wind (speed). Cunning troops are renowned for ambushes, ruses, deception and clever tactics to give them an edge in battle.
- *Endurance (Metal element)* – Endurance measures the ryu's dedication to fighting to the last man and their unwillingness to accept defeat. Too much can sometimes be as adverse as having too little, since their stubbornness can cost in terms of tactical flexibility.

## Example:

A player decides that he wishes to create a fanatical warband of raiders that rely upon speed, violence and sheer cunning to overcome their foes. Prudence and discipline seem superfluous to this plan. They create a 'ryu' with the following characteristics:

Ferocity: 4

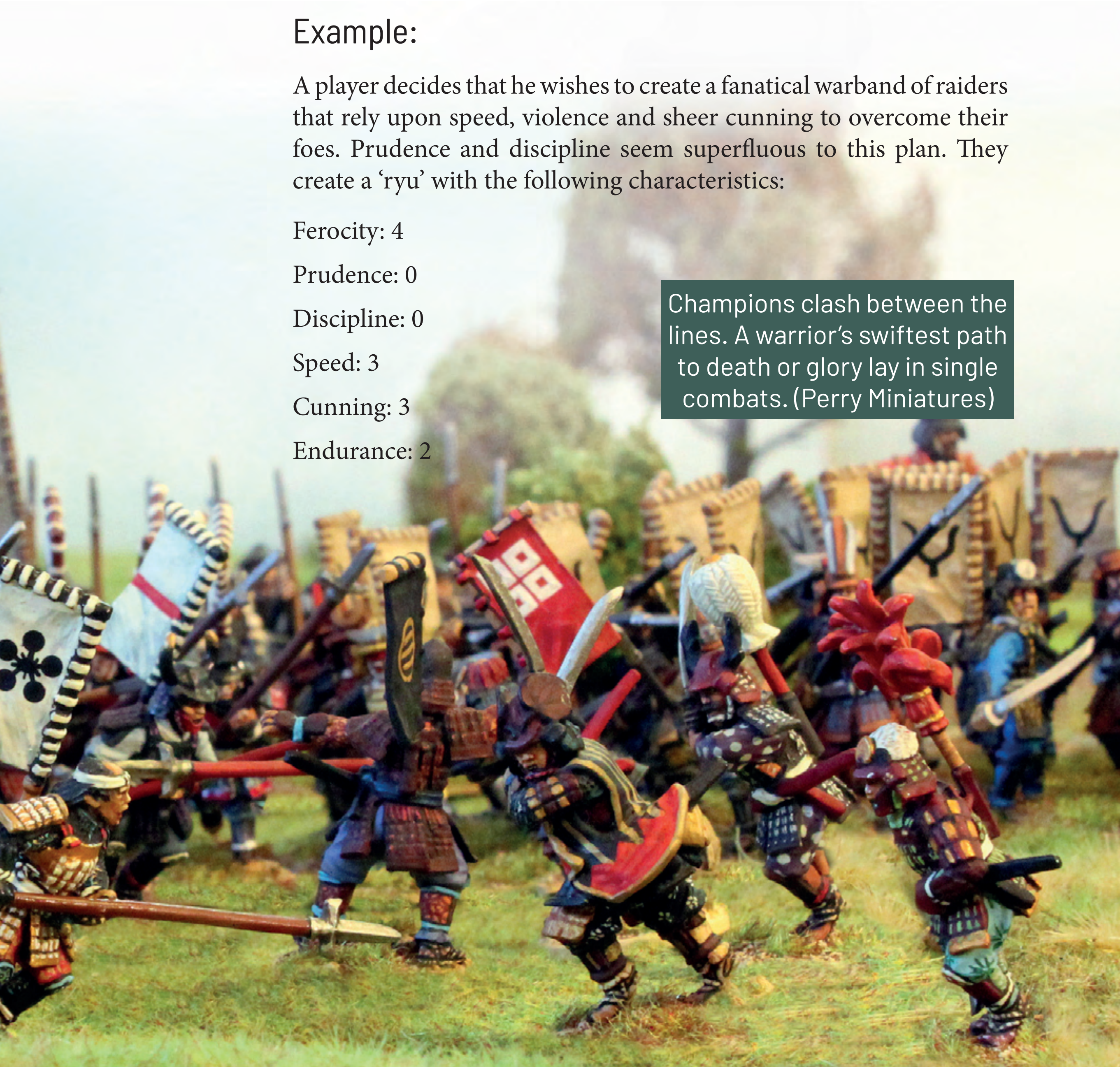
Prudence: 0

Discipline: 0

Speed: 3

Cunning: 3

Endurance: 2



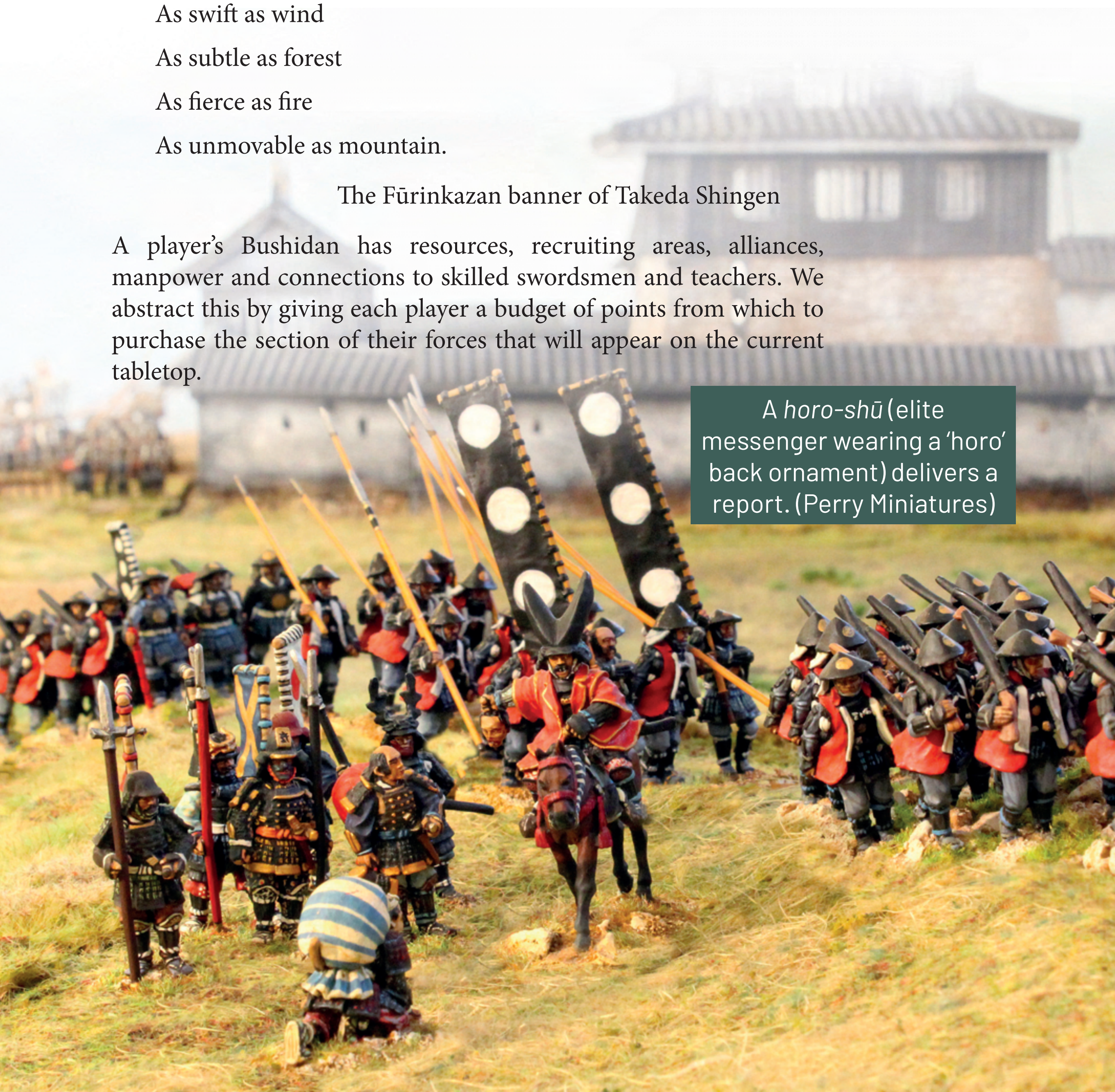
Champions clash between the lines. A warrior's swiftest path to death or glory lay in single combats. (Perry Miniatures)

# 3

# Creating Forces

> As swift as wind
>
> As subtle as forest
>
> As fierce as fire
>
> As unmovable as mountain.
>
> The Fūrinkazan banner of Takeda Shingen

A player's Bushidan has resources, recruiting areas, alliances, manpower and connections to skilled swordsmen and teachers. We abstract this by giving each player a budget of points from which to purchase the section of their forces that will appear on the current tabletop.



A *horo-shū* (elite messenger wearing a 'horo' back ornament) delivers a report. (Perry Miniatures)

## Points Budget

A typical force would be made from 250 points. Larger games might run as high as 300 points. Each force comes with a free commander-in-chief who is mounted. All points are 'per base' of four infantry or three cavalry figures, except for leaders and heroes.

## Smaller Games

If players desire, they can play a smaller scale game that will involve less troops. A game with 150 points of troops can be played with a 'ryu' designed from 7 points rather than from 12.

## Troop Costs

Infantry: 2 points

Cavalry: 5 points

## Armour

- Light armour: +1 point per base. The troop base is outfitted with light armour of a 'do' (often a 'tatami do', or other hardened leather armour). This can include light protection for the arms.
- Heavy armour: +3 points per base. The models on the troop base are equipped with heavy armour consisting of an iron helmet, a 'do', shin and arm guards. Some individuals may accompany this with extra protection for the thighs. (Note that the heavy 'sode' shoulder plates often seen on Japanese armours were not often worn in the field at this period. The provision of broader shoulder guards on the straps of the 'do' itself had made sode largely redundant).
- Upgrade heavy armour to bulletproof: +2 points per base. The troops have extremely heavy metal armour, with breastplates and helmets designed to resist bullets fired from firearms. This armour is heavy and cumbersome. It soon proved to be vulnerable to newer, heavier designs of firearms.
- Pavise ('taketaba'): +1 point per base. These heavy wooden shields can provide cover for troops. Only the front rank of a

formation need be provided with pavises. They provide the same cover as a wall does against archery but are of no use against firearms. Troops carrying 'taketaba' move at a walk and may not charge without abandoning the pavises.

- Bulletproof pavise: +2 points per base. Iron pavises are effective against firearms but are exceedingly heavy to carry. Units that carry bulletproof pavises may move only 2 D.U.s per turn. All other rules for moving with pavises also apply.

## Training

Training levels represent both formal training as well as experience picked up on the battlefield.

- Training level 1: Zero points per base. Peasant levies and frightened villagers with little or no formal training.
- Training level 2: +1 point per base. Peasant foot soldiers and ashigaru, bandits or pirates with some formal training.
- Training level 3: +3 points per base. Well trained troops such as samurai or experienced ashigaru units.

- Extra to class training level three troops as elite: +2 points per base. This represents samurai of great skill and accomplishment – veterans of many battles or a highly trained social elite.

A Bushidan may have only one elite unit.

## Weapons

- Heavy melee weapons: No additional points per base. Naginatas, o-dachi, Kanabo, tetsubos and other heavy, armour-smashing weapons have largely fallen out of use. They do, however, still have some advantages in combat in close quarters such as urban areas and rough terrain.
- Yari: No additional points per base. The long spear is the melee weapon of choice for this period, utterly displacing the polearms and heavy melee weapons of the previous age. Yari come in many different styles. Most are 12 feet long and the version wielded by samurai specialists often had long blades (naga yari). Some armies adopted extremely long styles (up to 30 feet long) for use in formal battle, but records show that many of these were trimmed down to a more manageable size in the field.

Local retainers are mustered. (Perry Miniatures)

- Bow: No additional points per base. The Japanese bow had reached its peak of development by this era. Bows were very much outranged and outclassed in killing power by firearms. They were, however, far cheaper to produce than guns. The high fire rate of bows made them useful for driving enemies into cover.
- Firearms: +2 points per base. This initial cost arms a base with 'ban-zutsu' – firearms inspired by the Portuguese arquebus. They are relatively short and easy to handle, but their range and their ability to decimate armoured targets proved a decisive new factor in battle.
- Chu-zutsu and 'samurai-zutsu': +1 point per firearm base (in addition to the 2 points required for 'firearms'). The firearms that equip a base may be upgraded to 'middle cylinder' matchlocks ('chu-zutsu'), or finely crafted 'samurai-zutsu'. These weapons developed in order to defeat bulletproof armours and mantlets. They have a larger calibre and longer barrels than the more common 'ban-zutsu'.
- O-zutsu: +2 points to equip one hero figure. This is a very large calibre man-portable gun: slow to load and difficult to operate, manageable only by the most powerful warriors. Some can be literally 'hand cannons'. They are able to smash gate hinges on fortress doors and destroy many types of cover. An o-zutsu is operated as a single piece, rather than a weapon used to equip entire units. This converts a 'hero' figure into a mobile artillery piece.

## Characters

Each Bushidan receives a commander-in-chief for free.

- Hero: 6 points. A hero is a renowned fighter, sometimes with an entourage of aides and veterans. They boost a unit's fighting power. A Bushidan may have a maximum of three heroes. A hero may be mounted at a cost of two points.
- Leader: 12 points. A leader is a sub commander that can inspire and rally troops in battle. A Bushidan may have a maximum of two leaders. A leader may be mounted at a cost of two points.

## Units

The troops of a Bushidan are organised into small units or 'kumi'. Kumi can be between one and four bases in strength. Most should be at least two bases strong.

The bases that make up a kumi do not have to all be armed and armoured with the same equipment. They can be more effected when all equipped to the same level – but some small units were still organised with a mix of weapons. Each base, however, is always formed from troops with the same weapons, armour and level of training.

## Kumi Unity

All bases of a kumi move and fight under a single 'order'. Bases of a single unit must remain with each of their bases in base contact with another base of the same unit.

## Attached Heroes and Leaders

Kumi may have hero, leader or C-in-C bases temporarily attached to them. The hero, leader or C-in-C is placed behind a base of the unit, in touch with the base. They then move with the base during the movement phase of the turn. Leaders, heroes and C-in-Cs give a bonus combat dice to any unit to which they are attached. A unit can have only one leader attached, but it may have more than one hero. It may even have a leader and one or more heroes!

## Time Period

The early part of the period, up until about 1561, sees the first introduction of firearms. These weapons were still in short supply and their effect upon battles was only just beginning to be appreciated. Bushidan from the early period should limit themselves to a single unit armed with firearms. These firearms may only be ban-zutsu. Bulletproof armour has not yet developed.

The later period, post 1561, sees the arrival of other forms of guns as well as bulletproof armour. Bushidan are not restricted as to the number of firearms units they may field in battle.

# 4

# Setting Up a Game

> Walk in the path defined by rule and accommodate yourself to the enemy until you can fight a decisive battle. At first, then, exhibit the coyness of a maiden, until the enemy gives you an opening; afterwards emulate the rapidity of a running hare and it will be too late for the enemy to oppose you.
>
> *Sun Tzu*,
> The Art of War

## Equipment

Playing a typical game will require a table, miniatures (or counters to stand in for miniatures), six-sided dice (D6) and a ruler or measuring

Korean rocket artillery in action. (Perry Miniatures) stick. Model terrain will be needed to create your battlefield. Each player will also need something to use as ‘victory tokens’ (for example coins or counters) and some ‘order chits’ copied from this book or downloaded from our website. Tea and snacks are optional, but certainly cannot hurt.

## Order Chits

Each force will need to gather order chits. The Bushidan gains one chit of the appropriate elemental type for each point that the Bushidan has in that element. The ‘metal’ element chits are there merely to help a Bushidan remind itself of its ‘metal’ element value – ‘metal’ chits are not used for issuing orders to units. Order chits can be copied from this book or downloaded from our website and printed out for use.

## Victory Tokens

Each Bushidan gains one victory token for each unit and one token for each point of ‘metal’ element in its ryu. These must be placed on the base of the Bushidan’s table edge, preferably in a container to keep them in place.

There are two ‘resource trackers’ that players will need to keep an eye on during a game. These are ‘victory tokens’ and ‘order chits’. Victory tokens determine whether the game is over. When one side runs out of victory tokens, it concedes the battle and withdraws.

Victory tokens are removed from a player’s stock of tokens whenever they lose units, or when they lose melee. Melee combat is therefore the decisive factor in determining victory.

Order chits determine the type and number of orders that may be used to activate units. As units become involved in melee or take large amounts of missile fire, they become ‘disordered’. Disordered units require an extra order token in order to activate them. Units can also be halted in their tracks or when charging by missile fire. Players may draw from stocks of order chits held in reserve to reactivate unit movement.

A Bushidan loses order chits whenever it loses a unit.

# Terrain

Terrain in the game can restrict vision, slow movement, provide cover, or create a combination of these effects. Areas of terrain such as woods, villages, brush and so forth should be at least two base widths wide. If a troop base is partly in 'bad footing', the entire unit counts as being in bad footing. If a troop base has the majority of its area inside cover, then the entire base is counted as being in cover. Some sample terrain types are as follows:

- *Open Terrain* – This represents open fields and grasslands.
- *Crops* – Tall crops such as wheat or regions covered with tall grass provide obstacles to clear line of sight. Line of sight can only be drawn two D.U.s into or out of tall wheat and grass.
- *Roads* – Most roads in Japan were dirt paths. Any unit that follows a road and remains on a one-base-wide frontage, may treat the road as open terrain for movement purposes.
- *Bad Footing* – Some areas of flat terrain or hill slopes have soft or treacherous footing that impede movement. Examples include zones of loose river rock beside streams and rivers, soft dune sand, muddy going or ploughed fields.
- *Hills* – Hills can come in many shapes and sizes and serve to block line of sight through their mass. Hills should have agreed-upon 'crest' points at which troops can see and be seen. Troops defending uphill of opponents can gain an advantage against charges. Troops on a hill that are at least one base depth above or behind other troops to their front can fire upon enemies that are at least one D.U. to the front of the allied units to their front.
- *Steep Hills* – Steep hills are an impediment to movement for troops moving upward towards the crest. Steep hills can also often have one or more faces that are 'bad footing' – rock scree, treacherous sliding soil or sheer precipitous angles (Icho-no-tani) that can be a severe obstacle to movement unless motivation is high.
- *Terraces* – Some steep hill slopes are deliberately terraced. Movement is not impeded along the paths at the base of terraces,

Resupply and logistics! Keep 'em firing, lads! (Perry Miniatures)

but troops crossing up and down a 'base depth' of terraces expend an entire turn of movement to do so.

- *Dead Ground* – Dead ground is areas hidden from view of the main terrain level due to dips or folds in the terrain, such as a gully. Units inside the dead ground and stationed at the edge can see out, but units outside of it cannot see troops inside unless the enemy opens fire or moves out of the dead ground.

- *Flooded Rice Paddy* – This type of terrain is quite common. It is a severe impediment to movement, counting as bad footing. Troops cannot go prone or operate firearms while inside rice paddies. Horses cannot enter ride paddies without becoming bogged.

- *Scrub* – Scrub and bushes conceal troops within them. Concealed troops cannot be seen until they fire, or until an opposing unit comes within one D.U. of the concealed unit. Scrub impedes troop movement. Low bamboo groves count as scrub. Taller bamboo counts as woods.

- *Woods* – Woods conceal troops within them. Concealed troops cannot be seen until they fire, or until an opposing unit comes within one D.U. of the concealed unit. Woods impede troop movement. They provide two dice of cover against fire.

- *Streams* – Streams can be shallow enough to wade across and can have banks that are easy enough to negotiate – in which case any unit that crosses the stream can do so at a penalty of half of its movement. Any unit that defends the banks of a stream against attack gain +1 dice per base. Deeper streams may only be crossed at fords or bridges. Streams may have sections of scrub or woods at their edges and can sometimes have rocky or marshy terrain bordering them.
- *Walls* – Walls provide two dice of cover against missile fire. Low walls may be crossed at as penalty of half a unit's movement. Higher walls are impassable except through gates.
- *Villages* – Villages provide concealment for troops within them. Concealed troops cannot be seen until they fire, or until an opposing unit comes within one D.U. of the concealed unit. Troops defending the edge of a village against melee attack gain an extra dice per base. Villages provide one dice of cover from firearms and two dice of cover against bows.
- *Palisades and Field Defences* – Wooden or bamboo walls are simple protection and fairly effective. They do little to stop bullets but are good cover against arrows. They offer one dice of protection against firearms and two dice against bows. Troops that are defending palisades in combat gain +1 dice per base.

A champion seeks out worthy opponent on the battlefield. (Perry Miniatures)

## Terrain Notes

The terrain around villages and settled territory in Japan is filled with terraced hills, rice paddies, crop fields and streams. Even the wider countryside will have a variety of terrain – fields, streams, scrub and woods.

A games table is made merrier by the inclusion of 'cosmetic' terrain. These are pretty to look at but have very little bearing on the game itself. Some suggestions include the following:

- *Votive Statues* – Roads leading into villages and through fields often have small votive statues on the verges. These can be small cairns of rocks – sometimes with offerings of flowers and drink beside them. They can also be more complex – carved rocks representing deities are also common in this period. A common sight in some areas are Jizo statues. These small votive statues are often clad in red cloth bibs and cowls. These are statues of O-Jizu sama, the guardian of children and they usually come in clusters or three or more statues (in some cases – dozens of them!)
- *Shrines* – Small shines are sometimes erected near sacred trees, crevices in rocks and hills, springs and at places where paths meet. Shrines and sacred trees will often display 'prayer ropes' and magical charms and prayers written upon folded pieces of paper. Shrines to local protective spirits (which can include fox spirits) often have boards where people can leave letters petitioning the protection of the spirit – or in the case of fox spirits, letters explaining that the writer has performed charitable acts and therefore should not be pranked.
- *Graveyards* – Villages may well have small graveyards nearby. At this era and in most rural areas, these will be grassy areas shaded by trees that will have memorial tablets at various grave sites.
- *'Highlight' Trees* – Plum trees and cherry trees can dress up a games table. If there is a plantation of these, the players might agree that they count as brush or forest. Other decorative Japanese trees include red Japanese maple and the beautifully eccentric matsu (pine).

- *Animals and Livestock* – Village areas can seem less deserted with the addition of an oxen or two, or a stray dog. Toshiro Mifune fans might even want to include a dog running off with pieces of fallen casualties. Sometimes a deer or boar hidden in scrub or underbrush can make terrain seem livelier.
- *War-torn Areas* – Given that this is an age of warfare and disaster, there might be a shortage of peaceful areas filled with plum blossom and nightingales. A superficially idyllic scene can be made more sinister by making fields seem overgrown, houses dilapidated or abandoned, having old burnt-out areas – and seeding abandoned weapons, rough graves, skulls and bones across the scene.
- *Casualties* – An area that has possibly already been the site of a skirmish might show evidence of casualties strewn about the scene. Bodies and banners floating in streams is a nice Kurosawa touch.
- *A Village* – A rural village will often have a watchtower of some kind – usually just a sheltered platform mounted on high wooden poles. This is used to watch for bandits and fires. There might be an 'alarm' installed, such as a hanging plank that can be struck with a mallet to alert the villagers. Given the ground scale, there will be room only for a house or two. Thatched rural farmhouses are a common site, as are better dwellings occupied by local samurai. A water mill is a common addition to a well settled village. Wells, feature trees, carts and wagons (or for seaside villages, a boat or two) make a village seem more believable. Most villages are built near a source of fresh water. They will be surrounded by small vegetable plots, livestock pens and the like, with rice paddies (or in the mountainous lands, buckwheat plantations) within easy walking distance nearby. In war-torn areas, some villages might be protected by palisades and obstacles made from sharpened bamboo.

# Set-up the Battlefield

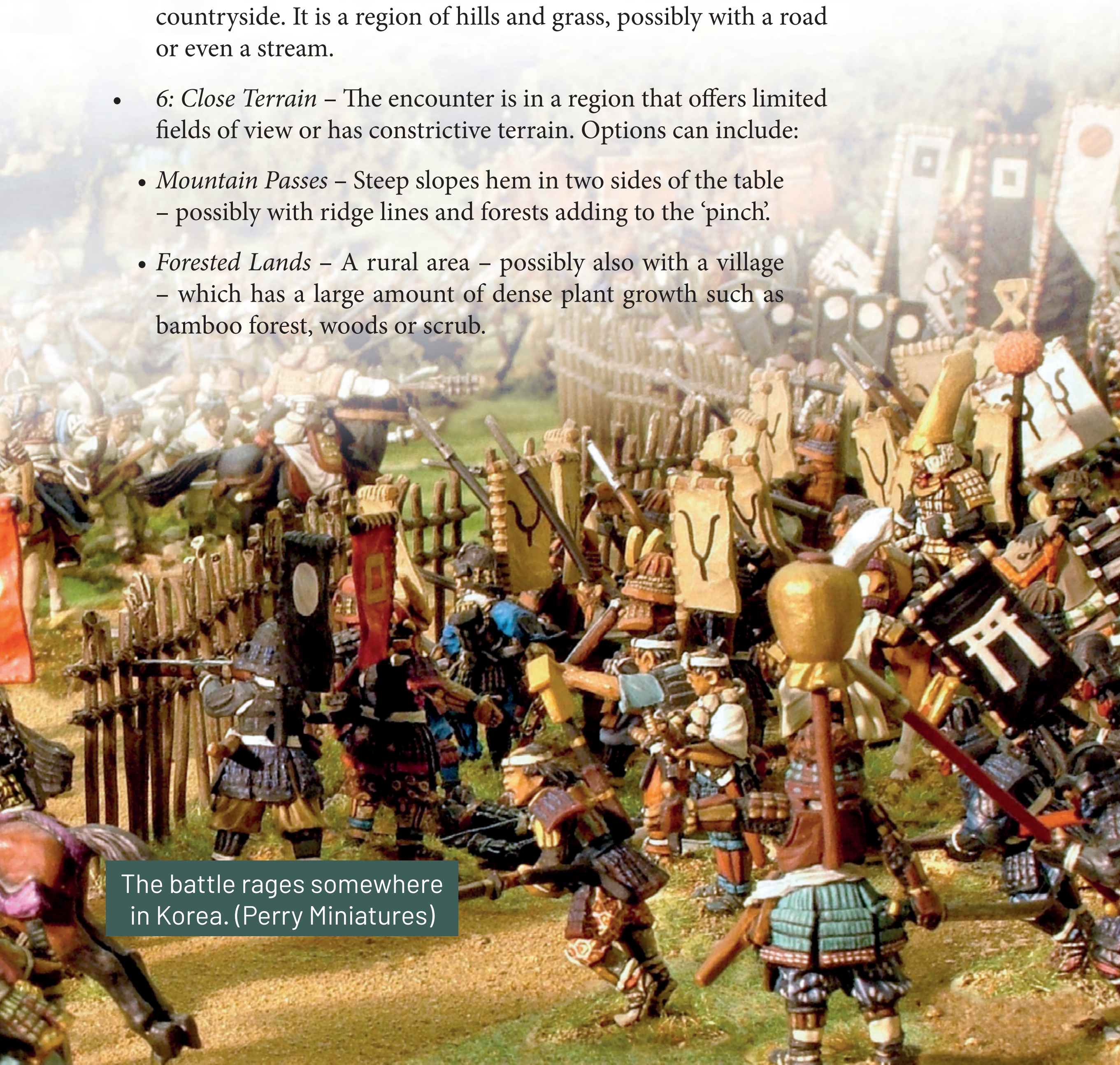
A typical battle takes place upon a table of at least 180cm x 120cm. In general, between one third and one half of the battlefield should be covered with some sort of 'non-open' terrain such as scrub, woods, fields, paddy fields, hills and bad footing.

Have the players roll a dice. The player that gains the highest score sets up the table. The other player may choose which side of the table that they will enter from. If players wish, they can randomise a theme for the table. Roll one six-sided dice:

- *1: Village Setting* – A village or shrine occupies a position somewhere on the table. Villages will have a path or a road (many villages are places where more than one path intersect). There will be fields, possibly rice paddies and quite probably a water source close to the village.
- *2: War-torn Village* – A decimated village occupies a position on the board. The ruins count as 'bad footing' but do not conceal troops. Fields are likely to be overgrown – or possibly burnt!

Happy hour!
(Perry Miniatures)

- *3: Shallow River or Estuary* – A broad, fordable body of water crosses the table. It is bad footing, but not otherwise an obstacle. Alternatively, the battle takes place along a shoreline. One table flank is the beach or shore that adjoins either the sea, or a large major river.
- *4: Fields* – The battle takes place in rural fields. The battlefield is an array of open land and agricultural fields. There is likely to be a road crossing the battlefield.
- *5: Open Ground* – The battle takes place in a region of open countryside. It is a region of hills and grass, possibly with a road or even a stream.
- *6: Close Terrain* – The encounter is in a region that offers limited fields of view or has constrictive terrain. Options can include:
    - *Mountain Passes* – Steep slopes hem in two sides of the table – possibly with ridge lines and forests adding to the 'pinch'.
    - *Forested Lands* – A rural area – possibly also with a village – which has a large amount of dense plant growth such as bamboo forest, woods or scrub.



The battle rages somewhere in Korea. (Perry Miniatures)

- *Built-up Area* – Three or four 'village' areas meet and interlink, forming a large area of urban terrain. Beyond the town zone are fields and roadways.
- *Hills* – Notably hilly terrain.

## Deploy Troops

The player who set up the table now places a unit upon the table. The other player will then place a unit. Repeat until all units have been placed upon the board. Both players can then place heroes, leaders and their C-in-C's in turn, until all troops have been placed on the table.

## Flank Marches and Ambushes

An exception to this is any units that are flank marching, or that are being placed in concealed ambush positions.

Troops that are on a flank march are not deployed until their march delivers them onto the battlefield. Their controlling player must note the turn on which the flank march will arrive and make an exact note of the entry position (for example 'turn three, five D.U.s from enemy base edge on their left flank'). At the start of the turn when the flank march is finally eligible to arrive, roll a dice. On a 4, 5 or 6, the unit may be placed on the table. Otherwise, arrival has been delayed, and the player may dice again on the next turn. Flank marching units are placed on the edge of the table once they arrive in the field.

Troops that are being placed in ambush may be placed inside concealing cover or behind terrain that blocks the enemy's line of sight (such as behind a hill crest, behind woods or a village). Note the position of the troops, but the figures need not be placed on the table until the unit is seen by the enemy (EG The unit fires, moves out of cover, or if the enemy comes close).

## Deployment Areas

Bushidan forces will face one another from opposite sides of the games table. Units may deploy within 4 base widths of their base line.

# 5

# Turn Sequence

When strong, appear weak.
Brave, appear fearful.
Orderly, appear chaotic.
Full, appear empty.
Wise, appear foolish.
Many, appear to be few.
Advancing, appear to retreat.
Moving quickly, appear to be slow.
Taking, appear to leave.
In one place, appear to be in another.

*Wang Xi*, commenting upon
'The Art of War' by Sun Tzu

Cavalry action
(Perry Miniatures)

## Ichiban no rūru: The Prime Rule!

We play games in order to have fun! Sometimes a wargame can stumble as players have differences of opinion over rule interpretations or measurements. If this happens, take a break, tell a funny story and hoist a toast to your opponent's success. If there is still any contention, just decide the results by a random dice roll and get back to gaming. Worry about the details later.

## 1. Roll for Initiative

Both players roll a die. The player with the highest score is the 'first activator' for the turn.

## 2. Move and Attach Leaders and Heroes

All leaders, C-in-Cs and heroes (also referred to as 'characters') may move. Players take turns moving their characters, with the 'first activator' going first. Those characters on foot may move up to 4 D.U.s. Those on horse may move up to 8 D.U.s. These characters may attach themselves to a unit by contacting one of the unit's bases. They can then move with that unit during that unit's movement actions. Characters may not cross the front of enemy units within 1 D.U. when moving.

## 3. Place Order Chits

Each player places order chits beside units that they hope to activate during the coming turn. Chits are placed face down, concealing their 'element' from the enemy.

Units that have a leader or C-in-C attached receive a free 'command order' chit. They may also have additional elemental order chits placed with the units. Both order chits are turned over when the unit activates.

- *Disordered Units* – A disordered unit requires 2 order chits if it is to be activated. 2 chits must be placed beside it. These are each turned over as a separate 'activation' for the unit during the turn. The first activation will remove the unit's disorder. The second order chit will activate the unit to move or fire.
- *Keeping Order Chits in Reserve.* – A player may wish to keep some order chits in reserve, not placing them with units on the board. These chits can be used to reactivate the movement of units that have been halted due to enemy fire, or to make units rally and recover casualties. Both elemental orders and command order chits can be held as reserves.

## 4. Activate Units

The first activator selects a unit that has face down order chits. They must declare either a move action or a fire action with that unit. The order chit is turned over and the unit makes its fire activation or a movement activation.

Once the first activator has made an activation, the next player may activate a unit of their own. Both players take turns until all units with order chits have been activated.

Bowmen deploy.
(Perry Miniatures)

## Fire Activations –

A missile-armed unit may use its order chit to open fire if it desires. See ‘firing’ below. All units may elect to simply stand and fire, firing at any units in unobstructed line of sight that are within their range and that are in their firing arc. Alternatively, some elements represent distinctive type of tactics and operation. These may be selected instead of the default ‘stand and fire’, as follows:

- *Command Chit* – Command chits can give a unit a ‘stand and fire’ command. The unit will remain stationary and will fire at an enemy to its front, that is within range, in line of sight and within its front 45 degree arc of fire. Alternatively, a command chit can be used as a rally order.

- *Ferocity (Fire element)* – Fire and storm. This tactic is an aggressive assault technique for infantry armed with firearms. The unit fires a volley at an enemy that is within its charge range and then immediately charges. The unit fires at its target with the target receiving +2 saving dice. The firers then charge into melee combat.

- *Prudence (Wood element)* – Reserved volleys. The unit fires with carefully controlled volley fire, by ranks, always reserving a loaded rank for emergencies. If the unit has already fired during this turn, it may still perform opportunity fire if it is charged. The enemy will receive +2 saving dice.

- *Discipline (Earth element)* – Firing wave (‘Sashiya’). Infantry archers can be trained to fight in disciplined, aggressive formations, keeping low to the ground (almost prone as they reload) and advancing or retiring, with each line covering the other. A similar tactic can be adapted to infantry armed with firearms. The unit may advance or retire one D.U. before it shoots, with no penalty. The unit also gains an extra +1 saving dice from missile fire if it is not behind a wall.

  *Cavalry – circulating fire* – Bow armed cavalry units can engage in ‘circulating fire’. In this tactic, small groups of mounted archers race forward towards a target and then peel off to one side, making a rapid pass and firing a few

Clash of champions! None could stand before the might of this man's "double water plaintain leaf" helmet crest! (Perry Miniatures)

shots before veering back to the starting position. Groups of archers are constantly on the move, providing difficult targets. The unit must remain stationary, but all fire from the unit counts as taking place at close range. The firing unit gains an extra +1 saving dice against missile fire.

- *Speed (Wind element)* – Rapid fire. A missile weapon unit fires at maximum effort, expending ammunition at a high rate. Each base fires at +1 dice. At the end of the firing phase, the unit is disrupted.

  *Cavalry - Firing Pass* - A bow-armed cavalry unit may make a full move and fire at any point of the move. Thus, a cavalry unit could move past, or even curve a course past an enemy unit and fire at the most advantageous point. Such an attacking pass may be made with units that are one base in frontage and multiple bases deep. Each base may fire to its flanks (or front or rear).

- *Cunning (Water element)* – Skirmish. An infantry unit armed with missile weapons may act as dispersed skirmishers that makes use of cover. The unit gains +1 saving dice against missile fire, but conversely their targets gain +1 saving dice against the skirmishers. If an enemy unit attempts to charge, the skirmishers may evade back one full move if the controlling player pays 1 extra order chit. Enemies that charge and fail to contact will become disordered. Skirmishers are vulnerable in melee combat. Each of their bases take a penalty of -1 dice in melee.

*Cavalry Skirmish* – Cavalry units armed with bows can be ordered to skirmish. If an enemy unit attempts to charge, the skirmishers may evade back by one full move if the controlling player pays 1 extra order chit. Enemies that charge and fail to contact will become disordered.

## Movement Activations

A unit may elect to use their order chit make a normal move activation if it desires. See 'movement' below. Alternatively, some elements represent distinctive type of tactics and operations. These may be selected instead of the default stand and fire.

- *Command Chit* – The unit may perform a standard move. This can include a charge if wished. Alternatively, this order can be used as a rally order.
- *Ferocity (Fire element)* – Ferocious charge. The unit makes a frenzied charge into close combat with the nearest enemy directly to its front. The unit will fight against its target gaining a bonus of +1 dice per base. If the unit should lose the ensuing melee, the unit will take 1 additional casualty per base.
- *Prudence (Wood element)* – Reserves. The unit keeps a section of its forces ready to respond to attacks and plug any holes in the battle line. If the unit engages in melee this turn, it is not disordered at the end of combat.
- *Discipline (Earth element)* – Tight formation. Units may assume tighter formation as a defensive measure against attack. Being in dense formation removes the +1 advantage cavalry have when attacking infantry.
- *Speed (Wind element)* – Swift move. The unit moves with great speed, running/cantering. The unit moves 3 extra D.U.
- *Cunning (Water element)* – Wedge or tight column attack. Wedge-shaped formations or 'attack column' formations are a means of delivering a heavy charge designed to break through a small section of enemy line. A unit that charges an enemy line in wedge/attack column formation does not count as flanked by

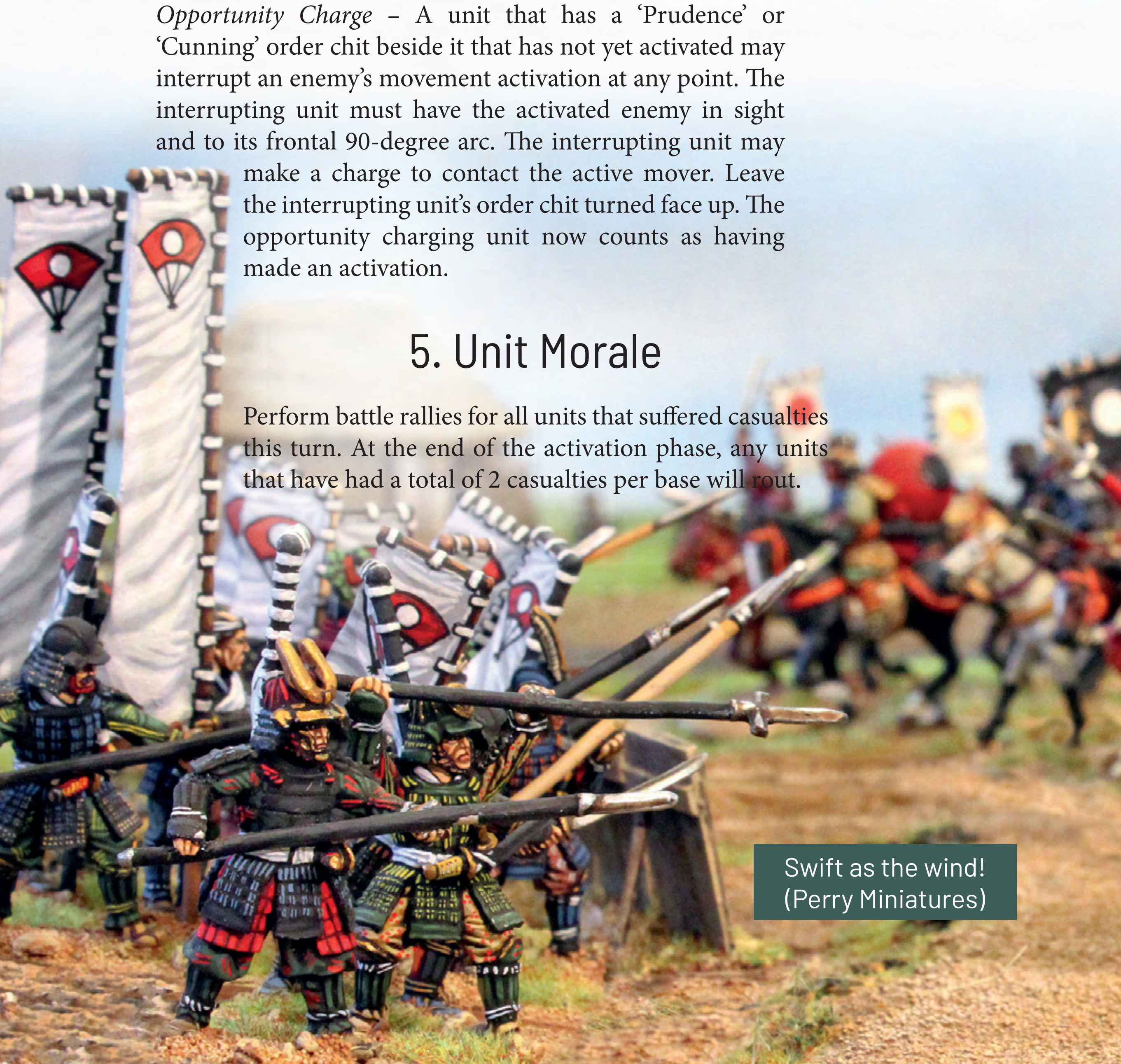
overlapping bases on either side of its points of contact. Wedges/attack columns are vulnerable to enemy fire. Units that make opportunity fire against them gain +1 attack dice.

*Opportunity Fire* – Units that have not yet activated during a turn may elect to make a fire action upon any unit that attempts to charge into contact with their front. The unit's command chit is turned over face up (if it has one – no chit is required). Opportunity fire counts as that unit's activation for the turn.

*Opportunity Charge* – A unit that has a 'Prudence' or 'Cunning' order chit beside it that has not yet activated may interrupt an enemy's movement activation at any point. The interrupting unit must have the activated enemy in sight and to its frontal 90-degree arc. The interrupting unit may make a charge to contact the active mover. Leave the interrupting unit's order chit turned face up. The opportunity charging unit now counts as having made an activation.

## 5. Unit Morale

Perform battle rallies for all units that suffered casualties this turn. At the end of the activation phase, any units that have had a total of 2 casualties per base will rout.



Swift as the wind! (Perry Miniatures)

*Order Chit Loss* – Each unit that routs or is destroyed costs the Bushidan one order chit from its stockpile. Place all the Bushidan's order chits face down or in a cup and randomly remove and discard one for each unit lost this turn.

## 6. Check for Victory

Each Bushidan checks its store of victory tokens. If a side has run out of victory tokens, then its moral breaks, its troops withdraw, and they have lost the battle.

## 7. Remove all Order Chits

If neither side has lost the battle, then all order chits are removed from their places next to units and replaced in the player's stockpile. The table is now ready for the next turn to begin.

# 6

# Movement

> *A military force has no constant formation; water has no constant shape. The ability to gain victory by changing and adapting according to the opponent is called genius.*
>
> *Sun Tzu,*
>
> *The Art of War*

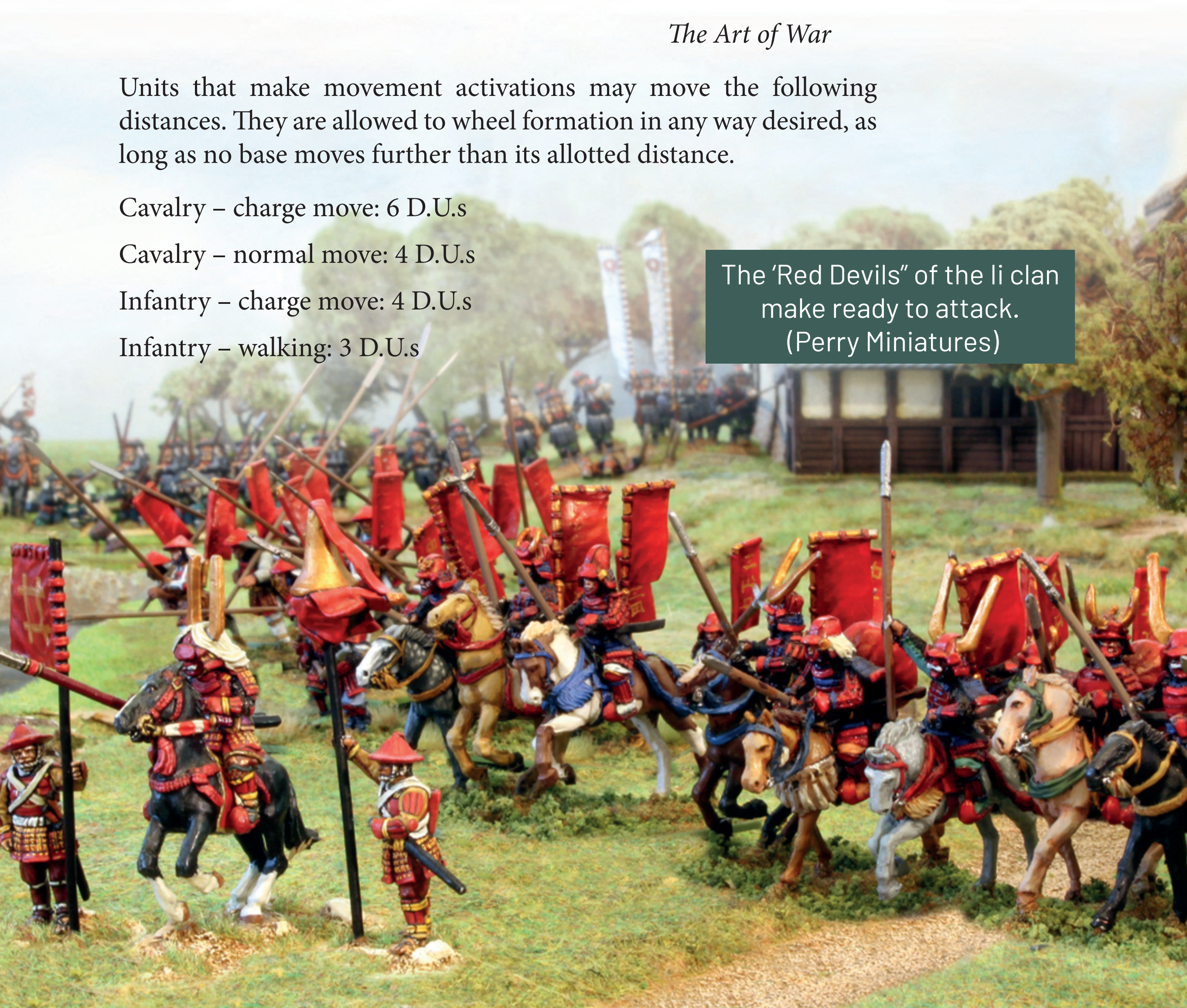
Units that make movement activations may move the following distances. They are allowed to wheel formation in any way desired, as long as no base moves further than its allotted distance.

Cavalry – charge move: 6 D.U.s

Cavalry – normal move: 4 D.U.s

Infantry – charge move: 4 D.U.s

Infantry – walking: 3 D.U.s



The 'Red Devils" of the Ii clan make ready to attack. (Perry Miniatures)

For movement through woods and bushes or crossing streams, all units except for infantry operating under skirmish orders are limited to a move of 3 D.U.s. When crossing terrain classed as bad footing, all bases that are partly or fully in bad footing are reduced to a move of 2 D.U.

Units that carry pavises may not make a charge move unless they abandon their pavises. Units that carry bullet proof pavises may move a maximum of 2 D.U. per turn.

A charge move is any move that will end up with some of the unit's bases in contact with enemy bases.

## Frontage, Expansion and Contraction

A unit that makes a movement activation may expand or contract its frontage about its centre either before or at the end of its movement, to any extent that keeps all its bases in physical contact with each other. Lines may be made to conform to terrain edges, if needed. Bases may be edged sideways or backwards to help put them into formation.

## Facing Change

Units may turn bases sideways or backwards at the start or end of a move, pivoting about their front central points. Bases that were in contact before the facing change may make a free forward 'shuffle' to place themselves back into contact with bases of the same unit to their front.

## Contacting Enemy Units

It is rare for units to charge into exactly perfect, squared-off contact with their enemies. The moment a charging base contacts an enemy base, it halts and is now in combat. Other bases from the unit may move forward up to their full movement allowance, provided they stay in partial contact with the other bases from the same unit. Do not scatter bases out of touch with the rest of their unit.

Charging units can end up contacting multiple enemy units at once. Each of these combats is fought separately.

Where two bases contact an enemy base, the base with the largest proportion touching will be classed as the main base in contact, and those with a lesser portion of their frontage in contact with the enemy will serve as flank support.

## Mounting and Dismounting

Cavalry may choose to dismount or mount at the start of any movement activation. Remounting horses costs a unit half of its movement allowance.

## Interpenetration

Units that are not operating under 'tight formation' or 'defensive circle' movement orders may pass through friendly units or be passed through. Units moving through other units must be able to move fully past the formation being interpenetrated, otherwise they must end their movement before they contact the friendly formation.

## Leaders, Heroes and C-in-Cs Contacted by Enemy

Unattached characters that are contacted by enemy troop bases are destroyed unless they can make an 'escape roll'. Throw 1D6 and on a score of a 1 or a 2 the character may make an immediate move of 6 D.U.s.

## Units that are Halted due to Enemy Fire

Units that are halted because of enemy fire may continue to move or make their original movement activation (if they have not yet moved) by immediately receiving an extra order chit. It therefore can pay for a commander to keep an order chit or two in reserve!

# 7

# Missile Fire

> Engage in combat fully determined to die and you will be alive.
>
> Uesugi Kenshin

Bases that have been given a 'firing' activation, or units that make opportunity fire, may attack enemy units within range. Infantry bases may fire at targets that are in a 90-degree arc of their front centre. Cavalry bases have the same 90-degree arc of fire to the front. They may also fire to their left and directly behind.

Other units block line of sight, as does concealing terrain such as woods, scrub, villages and walls. Units lining the edge of such terrain may fire from the terrain and they may be fired upon. Unattached leaders and heroes do not block lines of sight. Bases may not fire at enemy bases that are in melee, or that are providing flank or rear support for a melee.

A second rank of missile armed troops that are in contact with a front rank of their own unit may fire at the same target and in the same arc as the leading unit.

## Ranges:

| | Close range | Long range |
|---|---|---|
| Cavalry bows: | 0-2 D.U.s. | 3 D.U.s. |
| Infantry bows: | 0-2 D.U.s. | 4 D.U.s. |
| Ban-zutsu: | 0-3 D.U.s. | 5 D.U.s. |
| Other firearms: | 0-3 D.U.s. | 6 D.U.s. |

## Attack Roll

Units that fire missile weapons roll 2 dice for each base that may fire. All bases of a unit must fire on the same target unit.

## Number of Dice Rolled

Total the number of dice to be rolled by the entire unit and then roll those dice.

## Scoring Hits

To score a hit, a score equal or less than the unit's training level for each dice thrown.

## Elite Units

'Elite' units may re-roll any rolls of a '6'.

## Totals

Total the number of hits scored.

Arguments over rules interpretations can severely disrupt a friendly game! When in doubt, just roll a dice to decide, and then figure it all out later. (Perry Miniatures)

# Effects on Enemy Movement

If a unit receives equal or more hits at this point than its ‘ryu’ has metal element, it must cease all movement and is halted. If it is charging, it halts at the halfway point to its target. If it has not yet moved, the unit halts in place.

These units may have their movement reactivated by expending an order chit from the C-in-C’s reserve store. The element of the reserve chit is irrelevant – the original order chit remains in force.

## Saving Roll

Targets of fire may now make a saving roll to resist the effects. Each unit fired upon rolls the following saving dice. Total the number of dice to be rolled by the entire unit and roll them all together. Saving rolls succeed on a dice score of 1 to 3 on each dice.

## Attacker Casualties

The attacker has one casualty or more for each of its bases: 1 dice.

## Attacker is Disordered

The attacker is disordered: 2 dice.

## Range

Unit is fired at from long range: 2 dice.

## Armour

Defender is lightly armoured against bows: 1 dice.

Defender is heavily armoured against bows: 2 dice.

Defender equipped with bulletproof armour against ban-zutsu: 1 dice.

## Formation

Defending unit is infantry firing using a skirmish order: 1 dice.

Defending unit is infantry using a ‘firing wave’ order: 1 dice.

## Cover

(These benefits are not in addition to formation dice and a unit may gain one or the other).

Unit is protected by pavises and fired on by bows: 2 dice.

Unit is protected by a stone wall or bullet proof pavises: 2 dice.

Subtract the number of successful saving throws from the number of successful hits. This yields the final hit score.

## Effects of Fire

If the final hit score is a positive number, then the target suffers immediate effects from the fire.

Remove points from the final hit total to inflict the following effects in sequence.

First point: Target is disordered.

Each subsequent point: Target loses 1 casualty.

*Tanegashima* firing line. (Perry Miniatures)

## Example:

A unit of training level three archers fires upon a unit of spearmen in light armour. The firers have four bases. They roll eight dice, looking for scores of one to three for hits. They score four hits. The spearmen have a 'metal' element of three, so their movement is halted. They will require an extra chit if they are to move again this turn. The defenders are in armour and so roll one saving dice. They successfully make the save and subtract this from the enemy's total. The final hit score is three.

The first point of final hit score disrupts the enemy unit.

The remaining two hits are inflicted as casualties.

## Check for Leader and Hero Casualties

A unit that has an attached C-in-C, hero or leader must check to see if the character has become a casualty if the unit suffers 2 or more casualties per base.

Roll 1D6. On a score of '6', the character has been injured or slain and is removed from play.

## O-zutsu

A hero on foot armed with an o-zutsu may be attached to any unit. They may fire once per turn, when the unit is activated; for movement actions, the hero may fire before or after the unit moves, unless the unit charges to contact.

An o-zutsu shot causes a casualty on an enemy unit on a roll of '1' or '2'. Units that are in skirmish formation or that are behind stone walls receive a saving throw.

O-zutsu have other interesting powers: They can open a gate in a wall if the hero is brought into contact with the gate. They can also lever open iron grates!

## Firing upon Unattached Leaders, C-in-Cs or Heroes

If an unattached hero, C-in-C or leader is in the line of sight of a unit armed with missile weapons, it may open fire. The character is slain on a roll of '1' or '2' on a dice.

# 8

# Melee

> A true warrior does not think of victory or defeat. He plunges recklessly towards an irrational death. By doing this, you will awaken from your dreams.
>
> **Nabeshima Naoshige**

When a unit contacts an enemy unit, a melee occurs. This is adjudicated immediately. Units and bases may square up to contact as described above. Both units will then roll their attack dice. Infantry may not charge into contact frontally against cavalry that are in open terrain. They may however charge against the flanks or rear of cavalry, or may frontally charge cavalry that are not in open terrain.

## Attack Dice

Each unit rolls its attack dice. Bases that have contacted enemy with their frontal facing will roll 2 dice. Bases that are in contact with enemy to their flanks or rear faces roll only 1 dice.

## Element

The element of a unit's order chit influences combat. If a unit's order chit has an advantage against the element of its opponent's order chit, then the unit with the advantage gains an additional 2 attack dice.

- *Ferocity (Fire element)* – Fire has an advantage against Wood (prudence)
- *Prudence (Wood element)* – Wood has an advantage against Earth (discipline)
- *Discipline (Earth element)* – Earth has an advantage against Wind (speed)

- *Speed (Wind element)* – Wind has an advantage against Water (cunning)
- *Cunning (Water element)* – Cunning has an advantage against Fire (ferocity)

## Equipment

- Heavier armour than opponent: +1 dice per base. (Bulletproof armour does not count as an armour increase in melee).
- Yari versus other weapons, except when the yari unit is inside a village, woods, or bamboo groves: +1 dice per base.
- Heavy melee weapons against other weapons when combat in village, woods, or bamboo grove: +1 dice per base.
- Mounted troops vs infantry that are not in tight formation, provided neither are in a village, woods or bamboo grove: +1 dice per base.

Command groups. He who has the biggest hat wins! (Perry Miniatures)

## Enemy Casualties

- Facing an enemy unit that has one or more casualties per base: +1 dice per base.

## Disorder

- Enemy is disordered: +1 dice per base.

## Support

Bases of disordered units cannot provide rear or flank support.

- Rear Support

A yari-armed base that has another friendly yari-armed base directly behind in corner-to-corner contact and facing in the same direction, except when either base is in inside bad footing, a village, woods or bamboo grove.: +1 per base.

- Flank Support

If a base is in contact with an enemy and has an unengaged base of their own forces beside it and in base-to-base contact while flanking the enemy: +1 to the engaged base. This is not counted against enemies that are attacking in wedge or attack column.

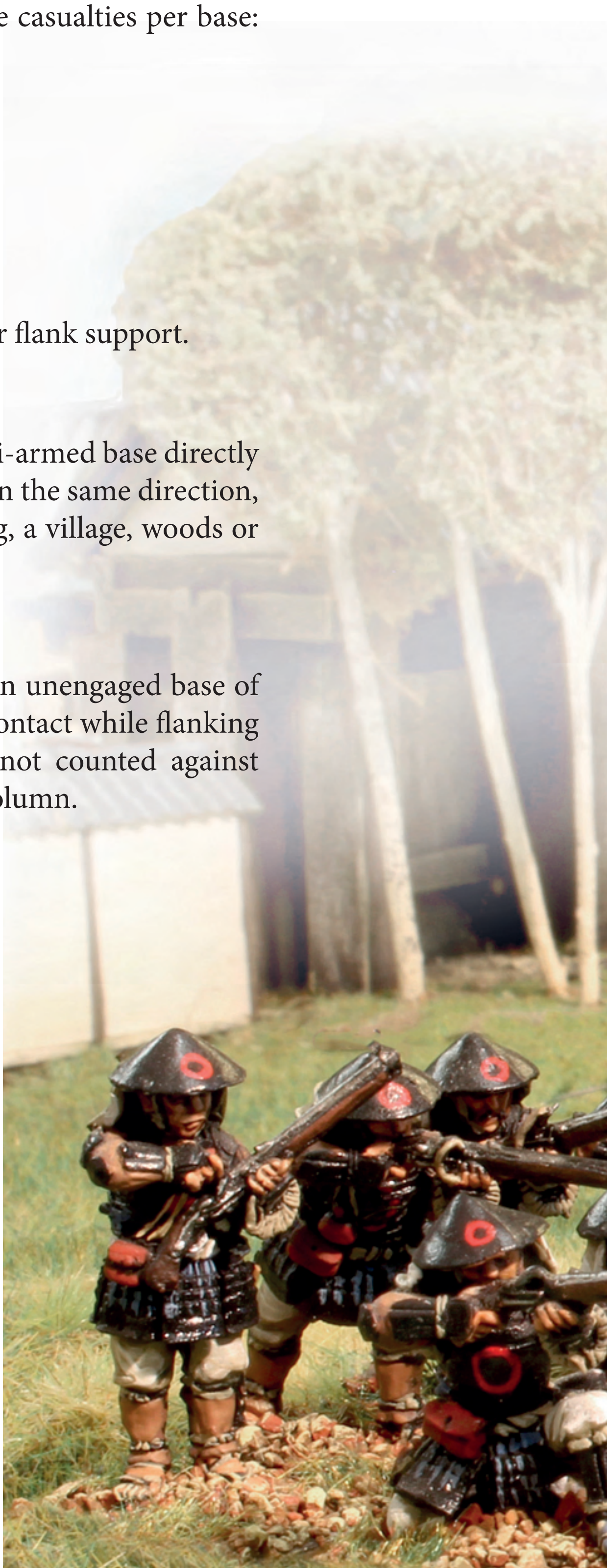
## Terrain

- Infantry fighting against cavalry while either are in bad footing, woods, bamboo groves, scrub or village: +1 dice per base.
- Infantry defending a linear feature such as a stream or wall: +1 dice per base.

## Leaders

- If a unit has a C-in-C or leader attached: +1 dice.

There is a maximum bonus if +1 dice to a unit due to leadership.



- For each hero attached to a unit except for a hero armed with an o-zutsu: +1 dice.

## Calculating the Melee Winner

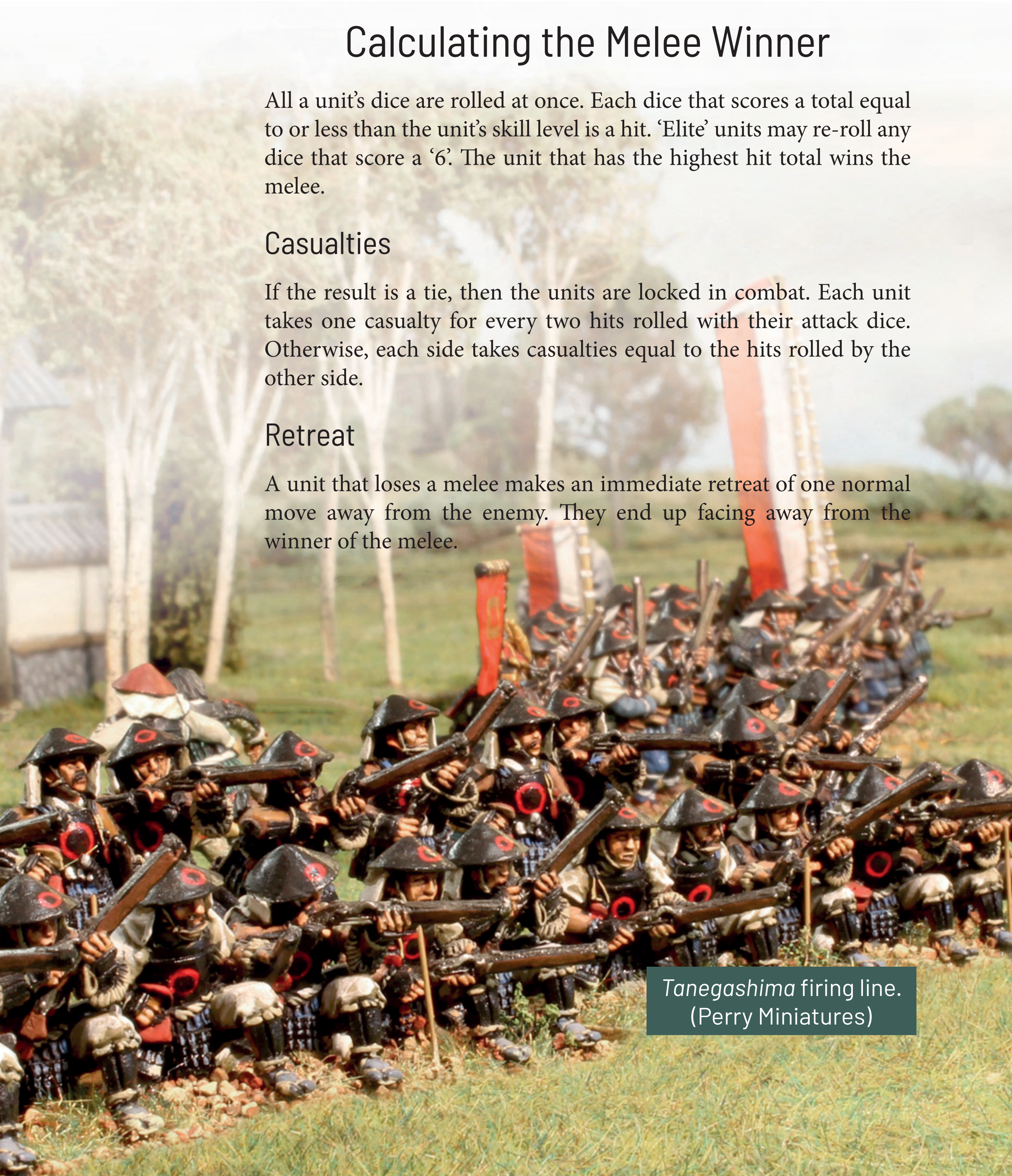
All a unit's dice are rolled at once. Each dice that scores a total equal to or less than the unit's skill level is a hit. 'Elite' units may re-roll any dice that score a '6'. The unit that has the highest hit total wins the melee.

### Casualties

If the result is a tie, then the units are locked in combat. Each unit takes one casualty for every two hits rolled with their attack dice. Otherwise, each side takes casualties equal to the hits rolled by the other side.

### Retreat

A unit that loses a melee makes an immediate retreat of one normal move away from the enemy. They end up facing away from the winner of the melee.



*Tanegashima* firing line.
(Perry Miniatures)

### Disorder

All units involved in a melee are disordered at the end of the movement activation.

### Character Casualties.

If a unit takes 2 or more casualties per base in a melee, then roll a dice for each attached hero, leader or C-in-C. A character is slain or injured and removed from play on a score of ‘1’ or ‘2’.

## Characters versus Characters

Unattached heroes, leaders and C-in-Cs can move into contact with other unattached heroes, leaders and C-in-Cs. This creates an instant duel between the characters. Both characters roll three dice, scoring hits on a one to three with each dice. The character that scores the most hits wins. Their opponent is slain!

The winner of a duel gains an extra victory token for their army. If you are playing a campaign game, then the victor will get to roll one extra dice in any subsequent duels during the campaign.

### Duels Before a Melee

If players wish, they may have heroes attached to a unit challenge the heroes attached a unit that they are contacted with in melee. If the challenges are accepted, these individual duels are fought out hero-to-hero before the main melee. Only the surviving heroes will add attack dice to their units.

Ii Naomasa takes the field! (Perry Miniatures)

# 9

# Morale and Victory

> Let our victorious feast in camp begin.
>
> Let then our friends proclaim, the war is won.
>
> Let us drink to harmony and in golden armour dance until the night is done.
>
> Let us thunder on the mountains and rivers with our drums!
>
> Tang poet *Lu Lung*, 668 AD

Victory comes to the side that first wears away the other's will to fight. The slow loss of a force's cohesion and control makes it vulnerable. Losses cause units to disperse and lack of success causes a force to lose heart. The loss of victory tokens tracks the overall moral of a player's army.

## Battle Rallies

A unit that takes casualties during a turn may make a 'battle rally' attempt. To do this, an order chit from the player's unspent reserves must be played upon the unit.

Roll one dice for each point the unit has in its 'metal' element.

If the unit has a leader or C-in-C attached, it adds +1 dice.

Each dice that scores a three or less removes one casualty hit from the unit. A unit may not recover more casualties than it has received during this turn. A unit will always retain a minimum of one casualty from the casualties it received during the turn.

## Example:

A cavalry unit is fired upon at close range by four bases of firearms troops. It takes four casualties. At the end of the turn, the cavalry player expends an order chit and makes a rally attempt. The Bushidan's metal is rated at four, so the unit rolls four dice and scores '1', '1', '2' and '3', giving them four successes! However, a unit always retains one casualty from the casualties received over a turn. The unit therefore removes three casualties.

## Unit Losses Causing Rout

Units that end a game turn with two casualties per base rout from the field. The owning player must immediately remove one random order chit from their stockpile of 'ryu' order chits.

## Victory Token Losses

Victory tokens are lost under the following circumstances:

- A C-in-C is lost: Lose 3 victory tokens.
- A unit routs off the board or is destroyed: Lose 1 victory token.
- A unit loses a melee: Lose 1 victory token.

## Reaching Zero Victory Tokens

When an army runs out of victory tokens, it retreats, and the game is over.

*Kōgeki-masu!*
Charge! (Perry Miniatures)

# 10

# Campaign Play

Luck favours the bold.
Leaders must fearlessly exploit the Secret of Decisiveness.
Act boldly at critical moments.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi

Players can keep a track of the fortunes of their Bushidan as skirmishes and battles take place. Each battle represents only a part of the forces the Bushidan can bring to bear, so a loss in a tabletop battle does not mean the Bushidan's military forces have been totally erased. Clans and groups can maintain vendettas that last for decades, with a final climactic battle coming only after many years of skirmishes and minor clashes. Campaigns can be played between any number of Bushidan.

## Glory

A campaign game is fought to the point where one Bushidan gains an agreed-upon level of glory points. This can be 12 points or more, depending upon the length of game desired. The game also ends if all other Bushidan have been conquered by one player.

If a Bushidan wins a battle, its 'glory' for the win is equal to its remaining store of victory tokens at the battle's end. All Bushidan begin the game with one glory point. Other glory gains and losses are detailed below.

## Campaign Map

Campaigns can be run off an extremely abstracted map. This can use hexes, or even just boxes that represent Bushidan territories that are connected to their neighbours by lines.

Arrange the map so that each Bushidan has the same general number of neighbours.

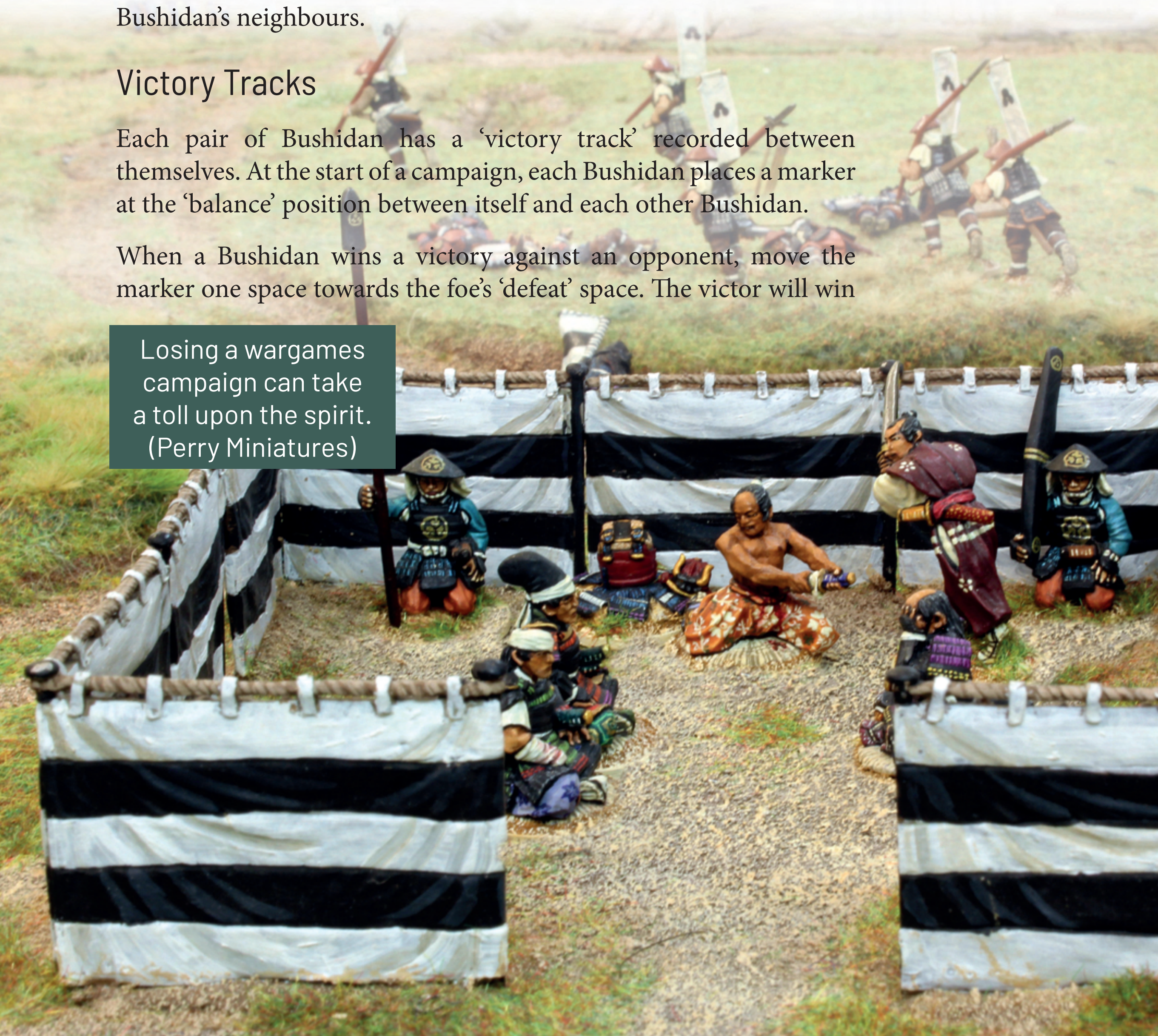
In order for a Bushidan to reach a neighbour (either to invade it or send allied forces), it must share borders/connections. Allies that try to send assistance to a friend must be able to connect a clear route to their ally. If this passes through the territory of another Bushidan, that Bushidan must grant them free passage, otherwise travel is impossible.

If a Bushidan is at a 'material victory' stage with another Bushidan, then a 'bridge' through the loser's territory has been made. The invader may freely pass through the invaded Bushidan to attack that Bushidan's neighbours.

## Victory Tracks

Each pair of Bushidan has a 'victory track' recorded between themselves. At the start of a campaign, each Bushidan places a marker at the 'balance' position between itself and each other Bushidan.

When a Bushidan wins a victory against an opponent, move the marker one space towards the foe's 'defeat' space. The victor will win



Losing a wargames campaign can take a toll upon the spirit. (Perry Miniatures) the benefits that come from entering that new space. A victor only gain benefits the first time they enter a space, so if driven back in another battle, but then recovering the space later, they do not gain the benefit again.

## Victory Track

(Bushidan 'A') Defeat – Incursion – Material victory – Influence – Balance – Influence – Material victory – Incursion – Defeat (Bushidan 'B'). Benefits for crossing into a new victory track space are as follows:

- *Balance*: The two Bushidan are in a state of equilibrium. They may even visit one another socially and have an opportunity to create alliances.
- *Influence*: The victor's win in battle gives it a newfound confidence. They also gain one free hero to add to their army, (this can give them heroes in excess of the normal limit of three).
- *Material victory*: The victor has seized valuable assets – controlling trade or new lands. The victor increases their army by 20 points to spend on their forces. Should they lose this position on the victory track, they lose these 20 points (and will not recover them, even should they retake this position).
- *Incursion*: The victor has now pushed forward into their enemy's territory. The victor gains +1 point to place into their ryu. The victor increases their army by 20 points to spend on their forces. Should they lose this position on the victory track, they lose these 20 points (and will not recover it even if they retake this position).
- *Defeat*: The defeated Bushidan crumbles and disperses. It is removed from the campaign as a force (see below).

  The victor has gained territory and prestige but may also have exhausted their coffers and manpower.

  The victor gains +2 glory.

  In one year's, time (after the end of next campaign turn), the victor increases their army by 20 points to spend on their forces. Should they lose this position on the victory track,

they lose these 20 points and will not recover them even if they retake this position.

# Alliances

Bushidan that are in state of 'balance' with one another on the victory tracks may engage in creating alliances. Solemn alliances are often welded together through marriages and ceremony. The allies must mutually agree upon a penalty in glory points that will be paid by any party that breaks the alliance.

## Assisting Allies in Battle

Bushidan may call for allies to assist them in battle. Allies are not obligated to provide troops. Before sending troops to assist, an allied Bushidan may negotiate payments in potential victory point shares for a successful win for their side in battle. Treacherous allies, of course, might be bribed by the other side to switch sides in battle!

All negotiations take place and then each ally called may write down in secret whether they actually send forces to the battle.

An allied force may send a single unit to the battle, accompanied by a maximum of one leader and one hero. They provide one Bushidan order chit that can be used exclusively by the allied unit. During battle, the allied unit is moved by the allied player and can request additional 'ryu' order chits from the main army during each turn. Units and heroes sent to help an ally in battle are not present in any subsequent battles involving the owners main force during the rest of the turn.

## Vassals

A Bushidan can decide to declare itself to be a 'vassal' of another Bushidan. Any victory that the vassal wins results in them giving one of the victory points they have earned to the suzerain. A vassal must provide an allied unit for battle if so commanded. The vassal will earn one glory point if their side wins the battle, provided there is more than one glory point won in total. A vassal can of course rebel against its suzerain at a cost of one glory point penalty.

## Campaign Moves

A campaign turn represents roughly a year of activity. At the start of each campaign move, Bushidan may make the following actions:

- *Re-shaping Armies and 'Ryu'* – Each Bushidan may shift one point of its 'ryu' into another element if desired. A Bushidan can remove troops or equipment of up to 50 points from its army list and use these points to make new units or re-equip other units.
- *Negotiations* – Players are firstly allowed to negotiate alliances, deals and strategies with one another. New alliances are then announced.

# First Round

All players roll one six-sided dice. The player with the highest score gains the campaign initiative for this turn. The character with the campaign initiative then announces their actions for the turn:

- *Raid* – Raiders are sent to plunder a neighbour. The Bushidan nominates a neighbour and sends a raiding force. The attacker may select one or more units from their army. These units go on the raid. Each unit rolls for the raid to succeed, needing a three or less if the unit is infantry and four or less if the unit is cavalry.

Joseon and Japanese troops battling blade to blade. (Perry Miniatures)

If the target has already announced that they will sit and defend their territory, all raiding rolls are made with -1 to the die roll. Units sent out on a raid are not present in the Bushidan's army for any battles that may take place during the turn. A successful raid steals one glory point from the target Bushidan.

- *Battle* – The Bushidan enters into battle against one of its neighbours. This battle should be fought to a conclusion on the tabletop.
- *Stay Put* – The Bushidan stays in place defends its territory. Any battles resulting from this decision are fought out and glory points are awarded. At the end of a battle, all combatants may roll to recover lost casualties. Roll 1D6 for each casualty lost. The casualty is recovered on scores of 3 or less. All lost heroes and leaders may roll to be recovered. All lost C-in-Cs are replaced.
- *Second and Subsequent Rounds* – Bushidans that have not yet had a turn and who have not fought as the main army in a battle, now have a chance to act. These Bushidans each roll 1D6 and the highest score now has the initiative. This Bushidan declares any attacks or declares that they will remain put in their territory. Repeat his until there has been one round for every three players.
- *Border Raids* – Bushidan that have not acted yet during the campaign turn may now attempt to make a raid upon a neighbour (if they wish) with a single unit.

## End of Campaign Season

All Bushidan casualties recover.

## Peaceful Bushidan

Bushidan that have not been involved in battles during a turn (neither as allies nor as a main force), or have never raided enemies gain glory due to their trade and stability. These Bushidan gain one point of glory.

## Scenario One

# A Day at the Beach

Somewhere out in the inland sea, a clan of sea marauders have established a base upon an island. Their rivals, the Ise, have decided to conduct a seaborn assault upon the island.

The defenders have managed to catch sight of the approaching fleet and have hastily armed themselves and are racing into defence positions.

The attackers are arriving by ships, which can land on any of the island's beaches. The fight is on!

## Attackers – The Umejima

The invaders can land on any beach. The invading troops can begin deployed in formations two bases wide by two deep from each ship. The attacker may elect to land in waves over the first three turns.

Each ship carries four infantry bases. Characters can arrive on any boat that suits them, and more than one character can be present per vessel.

The player can design their own ryu, or may take the one below:

Ferocity/Fire: 3

Prudence/Wood: 0

Discipline/Earth: 2

Speed/Wind: 3

Cunning/Water: 2

Endurance/Metal: 2

## Forces

One C-in-C

One leader

One champion

One champion with O-zutsu

13 ships

16 bases of foot samurai – training 3, heavy armour (bullet proof), yari

16 bases of lancers – training 2, light armour, yari

Eight bases of gunners – training 2, light armour, ban-zutsu

Eight bases of archers – training 2, light armour, bow

Four bases of pirates – training 3, light armour, heavy melee weapons

Ikki forces clashing with a samurai bushidan on temple grounds. Although the age of the temple armies was long past, warrior monks were still a force to be reckoned with. (Perry Miniatures)

# Defenders – The Iga Pirate Clan

The defenders begin the game occupying the island. They may set up 4 D.U.s away from any shoreline or can place themselves anywhere else on the island.

One C-in-C

One leader

Two champions

## Forces

16 bases of foot samurai – training 3, heavy armour, yari

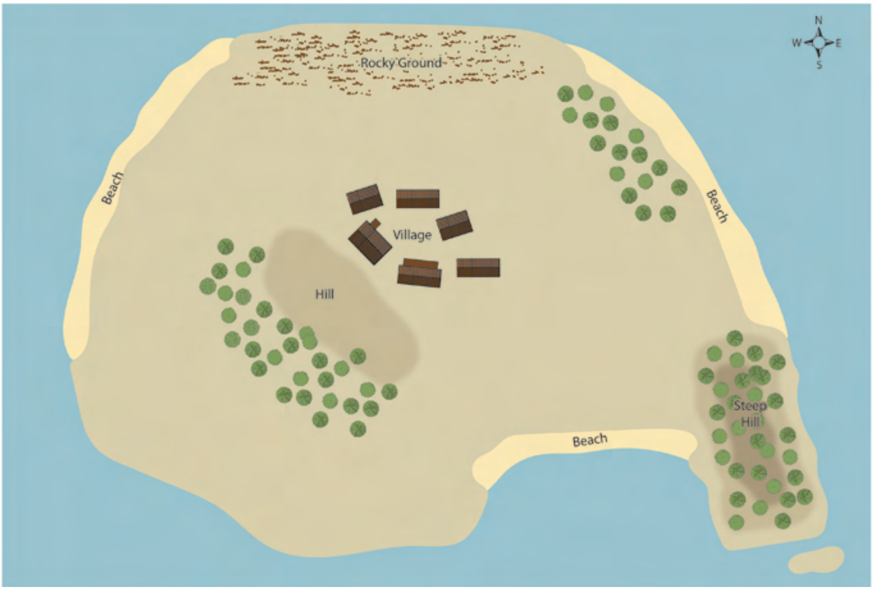
Eight bases of lancers – training 2, light armour, yari

Eight bases of gunners – training 2, light armour, ban-zutsu – half of the bases have pavise

12 bases of archers – training 2, light armour, bow – half of the bases with pavise

Four bases of armed wakou – training 2, no armour, heavy melee weapons

Four bases of armed brigands – training 1, no armour, yari



## Scenario 2

# Midnight at the Riverbanks

Hostilities have been escalating between two clans. Allied bushidan are mobilising to join the main forces.

The defenders consist of two bushidan who have been collecting their troops at a village beside a wide estuary. Each group has camped separately. More troops are expected to arrive over the next few days. Once the troops have amassed, the army will move northward upstream to unite with allied forces for a larger campaign. At the moment, the defenders believe they are well protected by the river. They are far from known enemies and are not expecting an attack.

The second clan – the attackers – have secretly approached on the far side of the river.

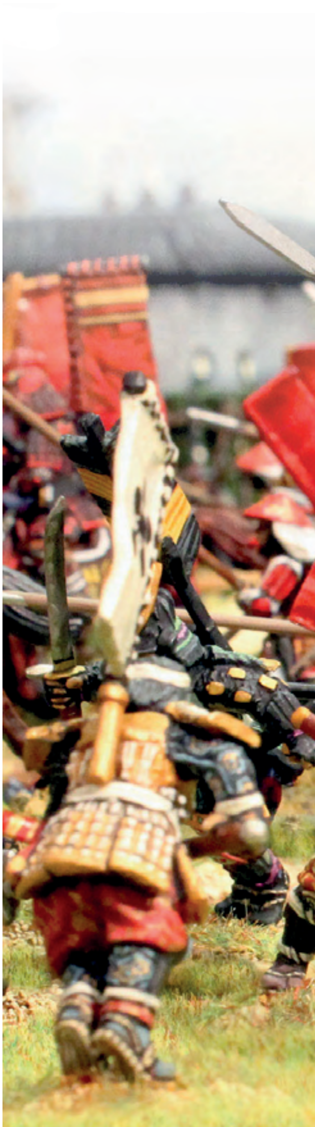
Unknown to the defenders, the river estuary at this season becomes extremely shallow at the lowest point of the tide. An enemy force has gathered with great stealth on the far side of the river and is ready to attack at lowest ebb.

## Terrain

The shallow river is currently 'difficult footing' for infantry – but not for cavalry.

The action takes place at night, but the moonlight allows for some limited visibility. Errors however can be made! The incoming attack has come out of the darkened east.

Troops armed with firearms can be seen at any range due to their glowing slow match, except for infantry with firearms in the attacking force, who carry their match hidden inside baskets. Once they fire, they may be seen at any range.



The camp and the village are well marked out (and illuminated within its bounds) by fires.

## The Defending Forces

There are two separate bushidan currently camped in the region of the river.

The defenders begin the game in camp.

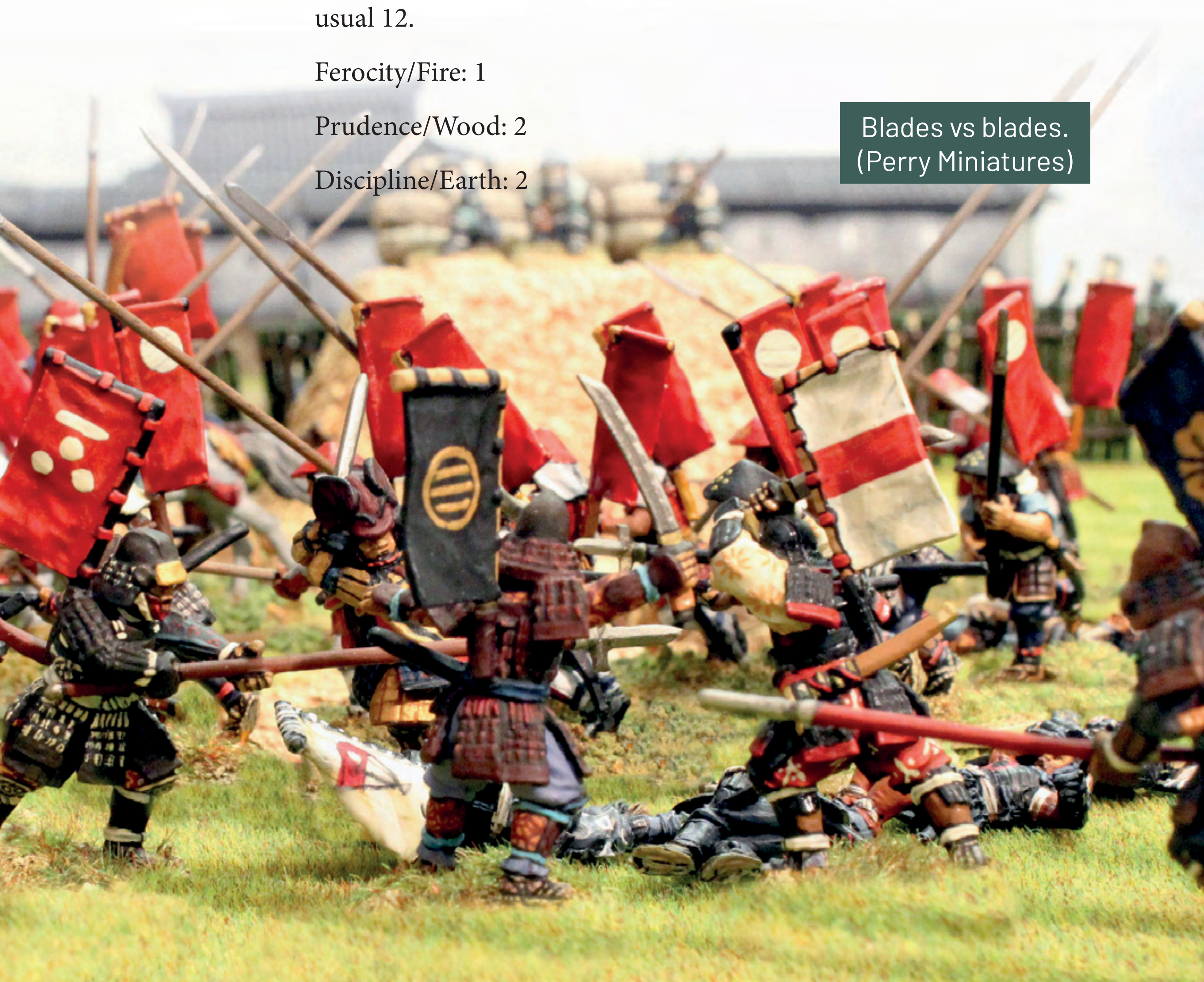
### First Force – The Sano Clan

The Sano are a small, vigorous family that hopes to make a name for itself as an ally to more powerful clans to the north. As a force of *c.*150 points, they have a ryu based upon seven points rather than the usual 12.

Ferocity/Fire: 1

Prudence/Wood: 2

Discipline/Earth: 2


Blades vs blades. (Perry Miniatures)

Speed/Wind: 0

Cunning/Water: 0

Endurance/Metal: 2

The Sano forces are all camped in the supposedly peaceful open ground to the west of the river. Their camp is surrounded by a light barricade of bamboo frames, against which mantlets and bundles of bound brushwood and bamboo have been placed. These count as palisades, although they are flimsy, and can be destroyed by any unopposed enemy unit that are in contact with them after their movement is completed (the palisade is destroyed with no penalty to movement). The camp gate is blocked by carts, and only counts as 'difficult footing' – although the Sano may elect to open the gates and make the gateways clear road terrain. The interior of the camp is open terrain.

## Pickets

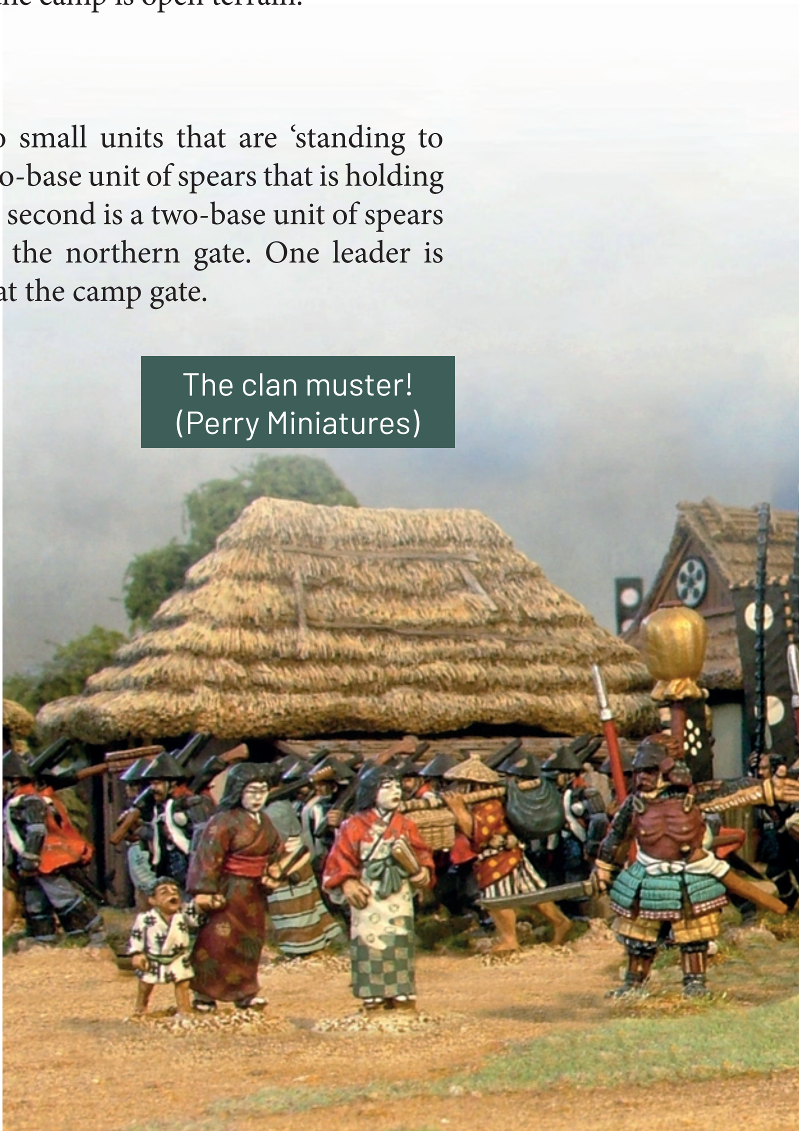
The Sano initially have only two small units that are 'standing to arms' and on duty. The first is a two-base unit of spears that is holding a barricade at the north road. The second is a two-base unit of spears at their camp itself, deployed at the northern gate. One leader is currently deployed with the unit at the camp gate.

The garrison:

Two bases of infantry lancers – infantry, training level 2, light armour, yari

One leader on foot

There are some small one or two-man picket posts along the riverside roads. These sound the alarm once an enemy force reaches the riverbank. They see the enemy approaching a little way out into the river, but it takes but a moment for conches to be blown!



The clan muster!
(Perry Miniatures)

## The Camp

The remainder of the Sano forces are all resting peacefully in camp.

The camp is wide enough to fit all the defender's bases and will be bounded by a light barrier of bamboo poles with occasional sections covered by mantlets. There are 'gateways' that are loosely blocked by carts and count as difficult footing for attackers.

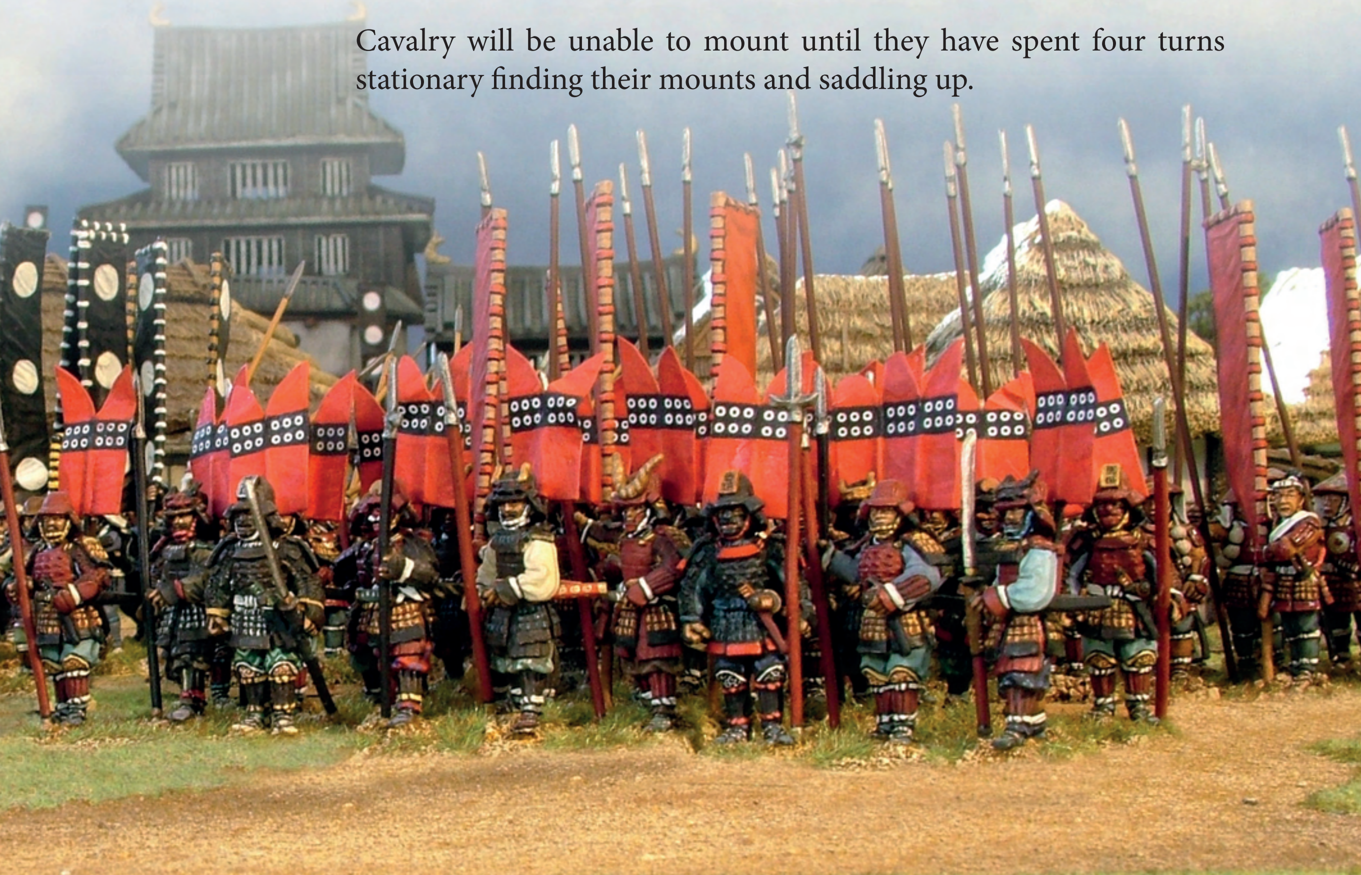
Undefended sections of palisade and gateways can be completely demolished by any attacking troops that are in contact with them after their movement is completed.

Place the remaining Sano troop units within the camp as desired. These troops are currently in quarters, unarmoured. When the alarm is sounded, they will take one turn to become active. They will however be disordered and unarmoured.

Troops may arm themselves with light armour if they spend two turns stationary, doing nothing else.

Firearms troops must spend one turn stationary in order to light their slow match before they can fire.

Cavalry will be unable to mount until they have spent four turns stationary finding their mounts and saddling up.



One champion

Two bases of Hatamoto – elite cavalry, training level 3, heavy armour, yari (but can only deploy as light armoured)

Two bases of cavalry – cavalry, training level 3, heavy armour, yari (but can only deploy as light armoured)

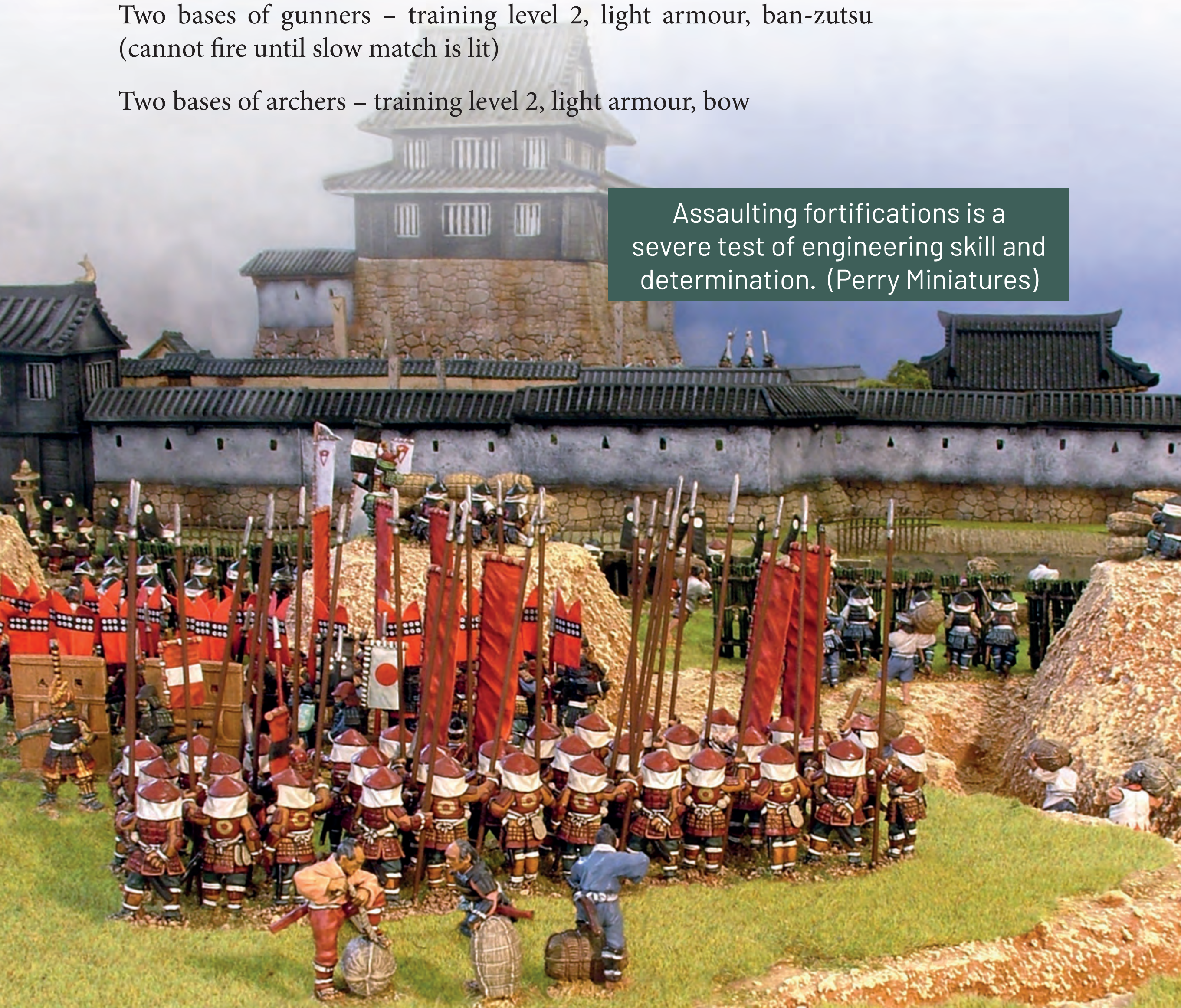
Two bases of Samurai lancers – training level 3, heavy armour, yari (but can only deply as light armoured)

Four bases of lancers – training level 2, light armour, yari

Two bases – Samurai gunners – training level 3, heavy armour, samurai-zutsu (but can only deploy as lightly armoured troops)

Two bases of gunners – training level 2, light armour, ban-zutsu (cannot fire until slow match is lit)

Two bases of archers – training level 2, light armour, bow



Assaulting fortifications is a severe test of engineering skill and determination. (Perry Miniatures)

## The Second Force – The Ichi-Ikki

This force is more chaotic and disorganised than the Sano, consisting of regional Ikki troops with a high level of ferocity and religious zeal, but with minimal hard discipline. As a smaller force, it has a ryu made with seven points rather than the usual 12.

Ferocity/Fire: 3

Prudence/Wood: 0

Discipline/Earth: 0

Speed/Wind: 0

Cunning/Water: 2

Endurance/Metal: 2

The Ikki troops are all rather haphazardly and raucously encamped in and around the village. Place the units inside the village boundary.

The Ikki are disorganised (and some have been drinking). They take two turns to don armour and grab their main weapons.

One C-in-C (mounted)

Two champions

Two bases of Temple cavalry – cavalry, training level 3, heavy armour, yari (will deploy with light armour)

Four bases of Temple contingent – training level 3, elite, heavy melee weapons, light armour

Eight bases of Ikki warriors – training level 2, light armour, yari

Eight bases of Ikki followers – training level 2, no armour, yari

Eight bases of archers – training level 2, light armour, bow

## Attackers – The Hoko

The Hoko bushidan has gathered cavalry from many allied families. Their force for this midnight assault is entirely mounted. Supporting infantry are being piggybacked with the cavalry (riding double) or are mounted upon pack horses and nags.

Any units that carry piggybacked infantry, or who ride pack horses, are automatically disordered if in combat (and the piggybacked troops cannot join in the fighting). These infantry troops may freely dismount at the start of any turn, and then move normally.

Ferocity/Fire: 3

Prudence/Wood: 0

Discipline/Earth: 0

Speed/Wind: 3

Cunning/Water: 3

Endurance/Metal: 3

One C-in-C (mounted)

One Leader (mounted)

Three Champions (mounted)

Two bases of Hatamoto cavalry – training level 3, elite, heavy armour, yari

12 bases of Samurai cavalry – training level 3, heavy armour, yari

On the Korean front, superior Japanese firearms technology was telling in both open battle and siege. (Perry Miniatures)

Four bases of Samurai horse archers – training level 3, heavy armour, bow

Eight bases of gunners riding double with samurai – training level 2, light armour, ban-zutsu

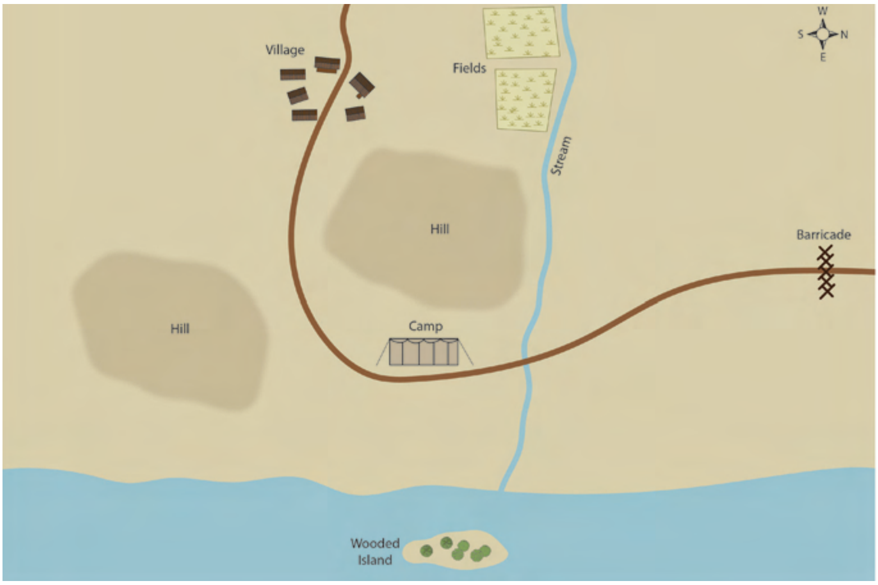
Four bases of lancers mounted on pack horses – training level 2, light armour, yari, packhorse

Two bases of stampeding cattle

All attackers deploy in the river anywhere on the eastern side of the table.

Stampeding cattle are represented upon the table as any cavalry troops the attacker desires. They are only revealed to be cattle when they come within two D.U. of an enemy unit. Stampeding cattle can be made to contact an enemy force. This disorders the enemy but the cattle bases that are in contact are removed. A stampeding cattle base in contact with palisades will destroy both the cattle and the palisades.

The attackers are all mounted. Each unit of cavalry carries a unit of infantry 'doubling up', riding behind the riders. The infantry will dismount for free once they reach the western bank of the river.



## Scenario 3

# The 6 ½ Samurai

A village in a valley has been regular prey to a large force of bandits. This year however, the peasants have a surprise in store for the marauders. They have managed to secure the assistance of several Samurai heroes, who have organised the villagers to fight the invaders!

This is a 'small scale' fight, with forces of 150 points or less each.

## Terrain

The villagers have created barricades to protect their village. These offer cover from missile fire. They may elect to open the barricades at any road area, allowing troops during that turn to treat the road zone as clear terrain.

The hills to the north and south are extremely steep. They are impassable to horses.

## Bandit Forces

The bandit player may design their own ryu, or they may take the default ryu as listed (seven points):

Ferocity/Fire: 2

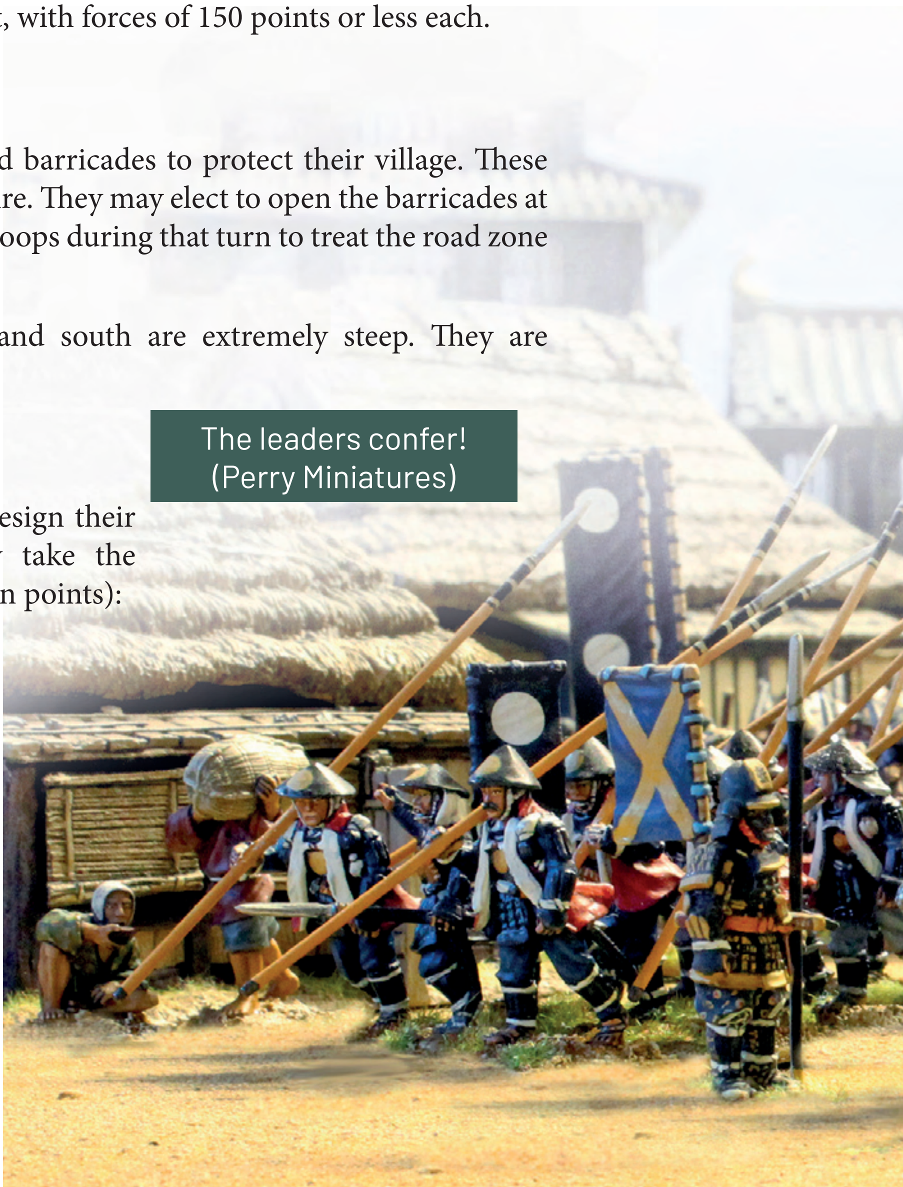
Prudence/Wood: 0

Discipline/Earth: 0

Speed/Wind: 2

Cunning/Water: 1

Endurance/Metal: 2



The leaders confer!
(Perry Miniatures)

## Forces

One bandit leader (C-in-C) – mounted

One leader – mounted.

One character O-zutsu

One character

Two bases of bandit armoured cavalry – cavalry with yari, heavy armour, training level 3

Four bases of bandit rabble cavalry – cavalry with yari, light armour, training level 2

16 bases of bandits – infantry with light armour, training level 2

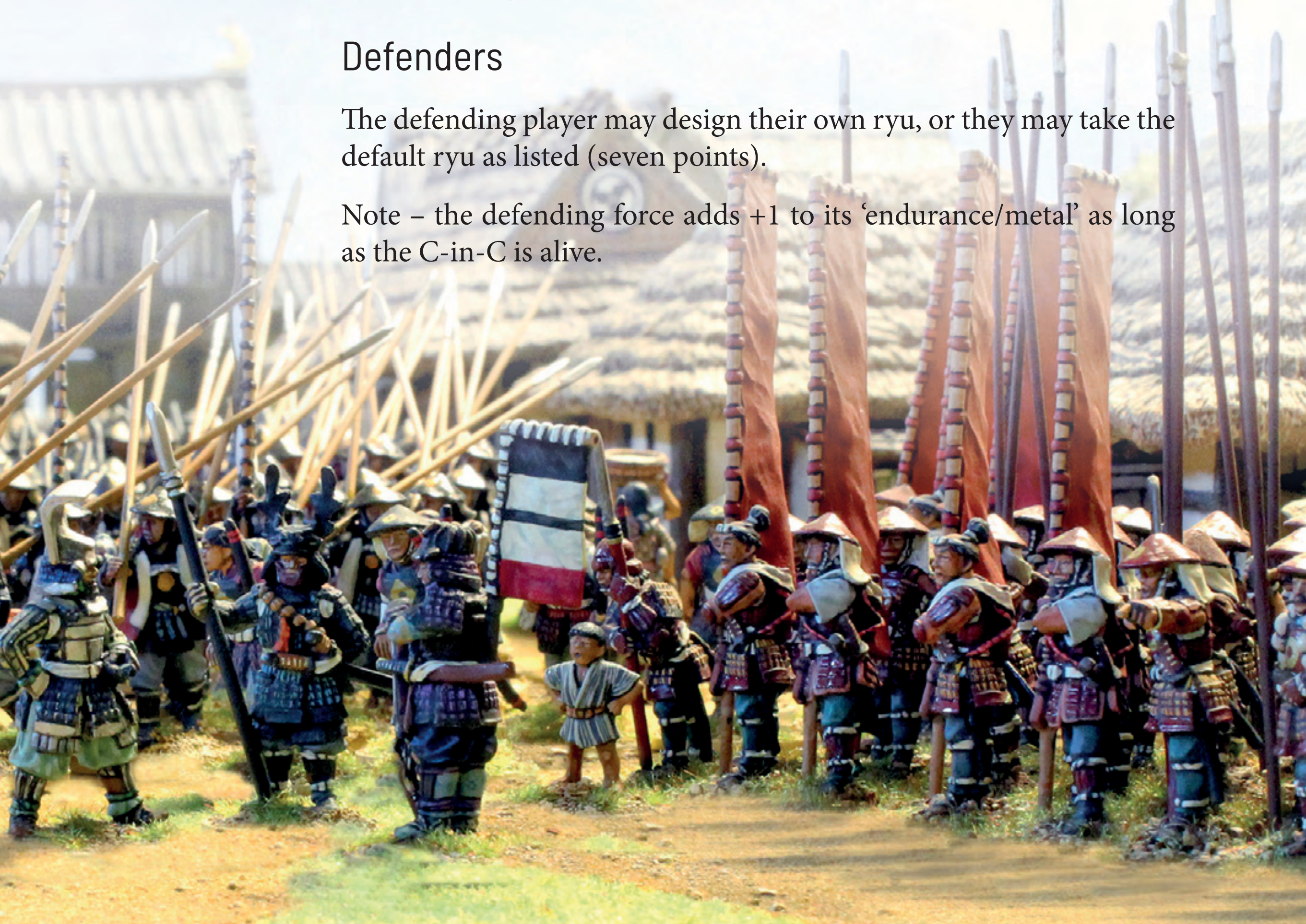
Eight bases of bandits – infantry with no armour, training level 2

Two bases of bandits with firearms – infantry with light armour, ban-zutsu, training level 2

## Defenders

The defending player may design their own ryu, or they may take the default ryu as listed (seven points).

Note – the defending force adds +1 to its 'endurance/metal' as long as the C-in-C is alive.



Ferocity/Fire: 2

Prudence/Wood: 1

Discipline/Earth: 2

Speed/Wind: 0

Cunning/Water: 0

Endurance/Metal: 3

## Forces

One C-in-C

Two leaders

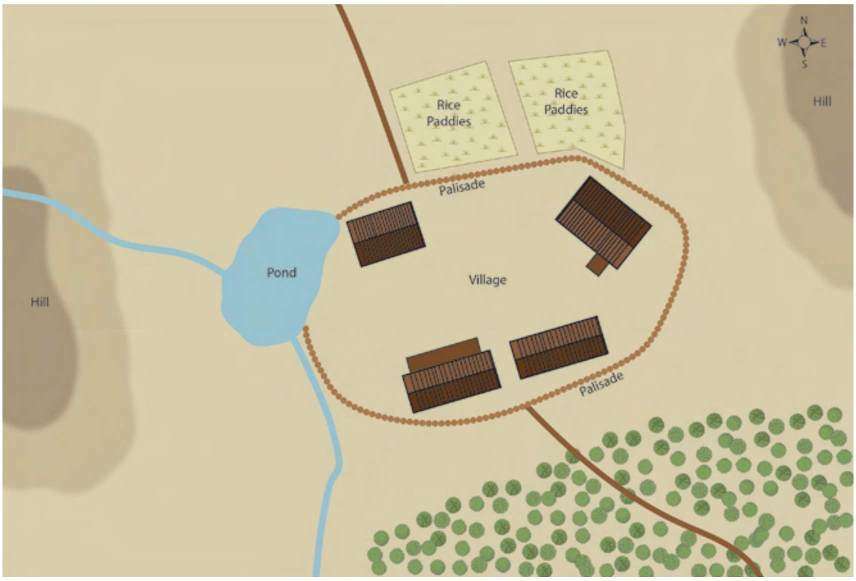
Three champions

20 bases of peasant spearmen – training 1, no armour, yari

Four bases of peasant archers – training 1, no armour, bow

Four bases of enraged women and youths – training 1, no armour, heavy melee weapons

All characters of the defender's army roll one extra dice during any duel with an enemy character.


N
W
E
S
Hill
Rice Paddies
Rice Paddies
Palisade
Pond
Village
Hill
Palisade

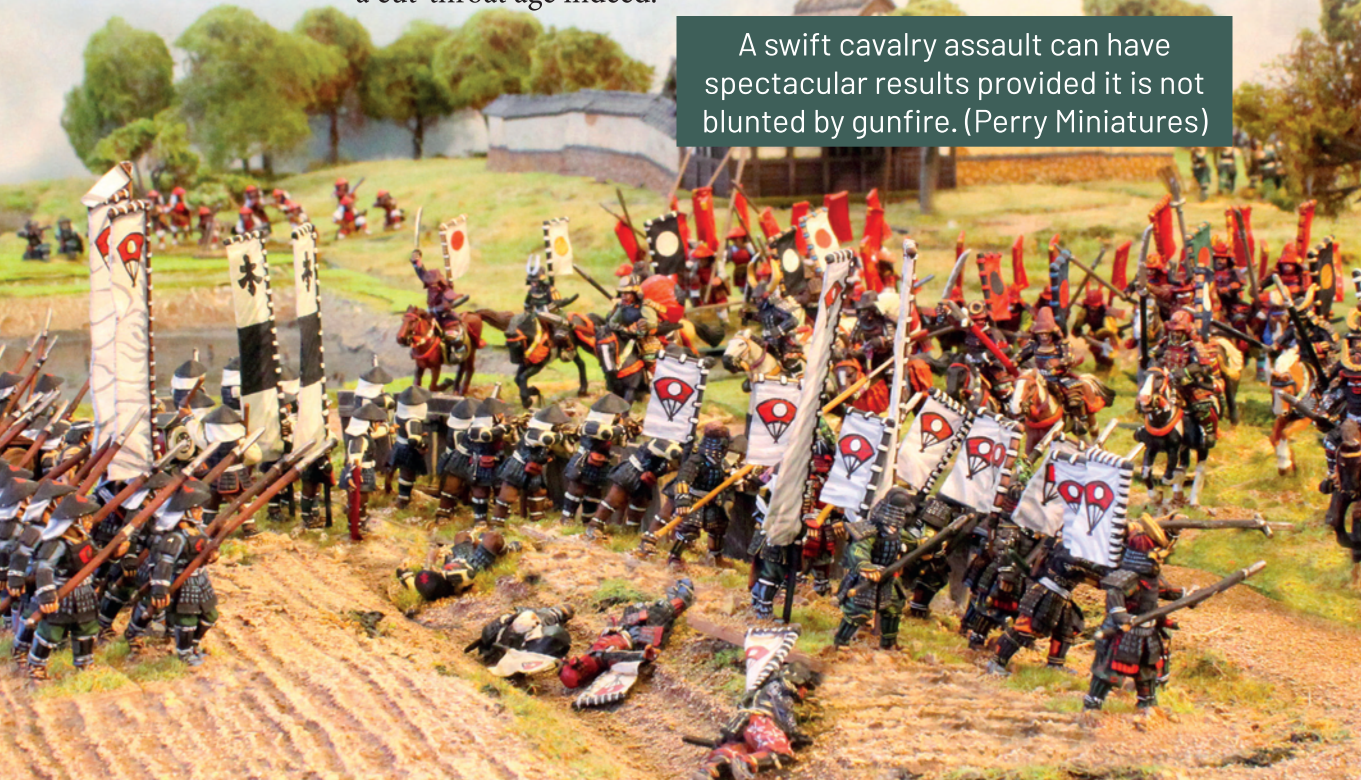
# Appendix I

# Historical Notes

> Both the victor and the vanquished are, but drops of dew,
> but bolts of lightning – thus, should we view the world.
>
> **Death poem of the daimyo *Ouchi Yoshitaka***, 1551

These rules specifically cover the last era of the Warring States period, that is, the period after the introduction of firearms and where the spear has become the melee weapon of choice. It is a period of technological innovation, of new tactical thinking, experimentation and social upheaval.

It was also an opportunistic age. Sons slew fathers, brothers slew brothers – retainers betrayed their lords, deserted, shifted allegiance… a truly Machiavellian age. Later Japanese romanticists would reimage the era with a layer of noble chivalry, but in reality, the Sengoku was a cut-throat age indeed.

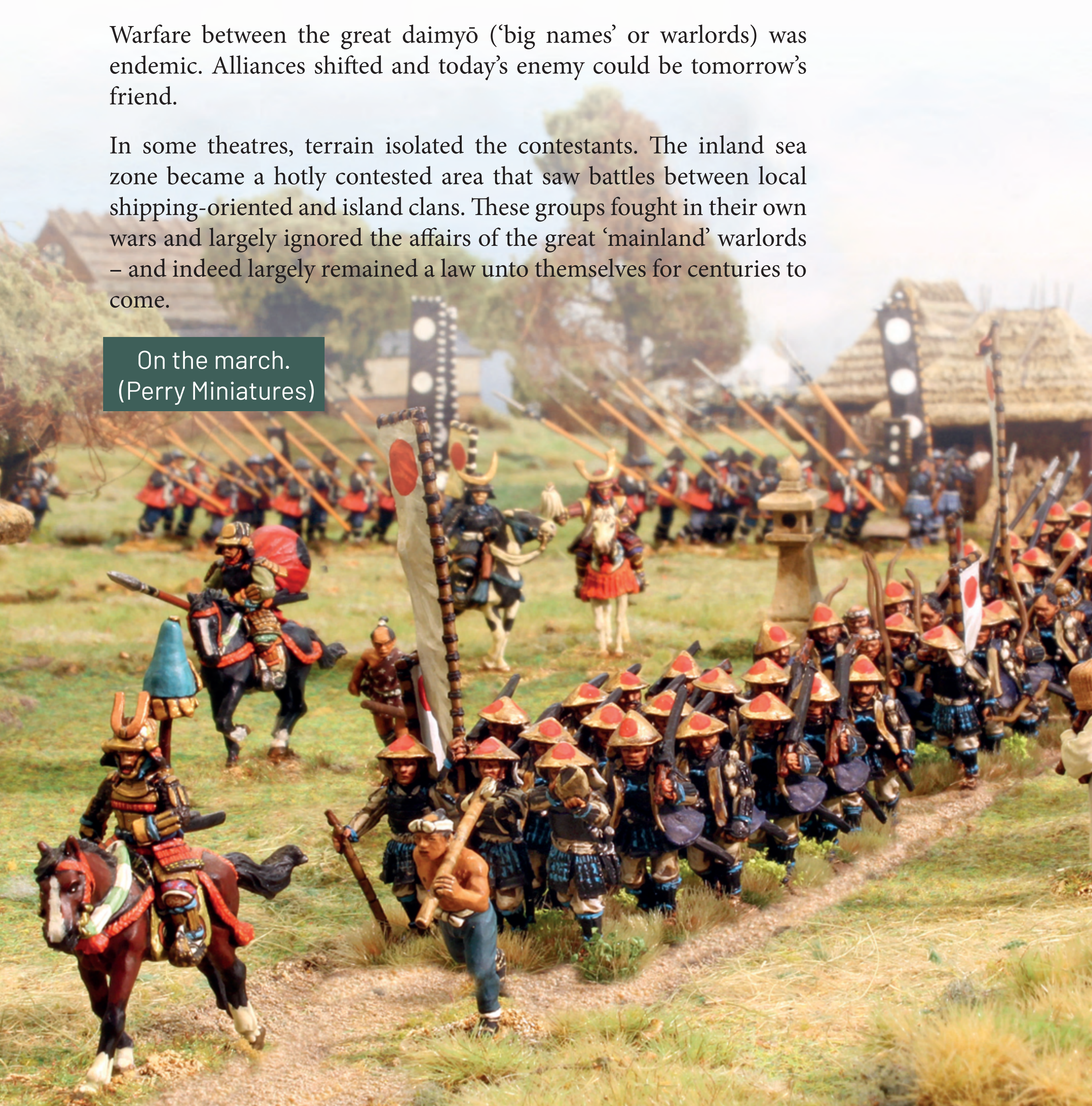


A swift cavalry assault can have spectacular results provided it is not blunted by gunfire. (Perry Miniatures)

In many ways, this period differs from the previous feudal society of Japan. Administration decentralised away from the court and the shogunate and became invested in local warlords, many of whom adopted old names and titles to help legitimise their power. As warlords fought one another and absorbed each other's territories, the small independent lords largely vanished, or became retainers of larger players. Finally, the victory of the Tokugawa largely re-centralised power once more.

Warfare between the great daimyō ('big names' or warlords) was endemic. Alliances shifted and today's enemy could be tomorrow's friend.

In some theatres, terrain isolated the contestants. The inland sea zone became a hotly contested area that saw battles between local shipping-oriented and island clans. These groups fought in their own wars and largely ignored the affairs of the great 'mainland' warlords – and indeed largely remained a law unto themselves for centuries to come.



On the march. (Perry Miniatures)

Another interesting aspect of the period is the appearance of religious 'Ikko Ikki' – or 'uprisings'. These groups sprung up about villages and monastic lands, fired by the Jōdo Shinshū sect of Buddhism. They opposed the rule of the daimyō. Interestingly, they were regional rather than class based. An 'Ikko Ikki' would contain local samurai, local peasants and monks working together for their town or province. They could even include local lords. Temple forces often gave them a solid core of warrior monks who trained the peasantry well. 'Ikko Ikki' troops were highly motivated.

Japanese pirates are another phenomena of the era. Pirates operating from Japan's inner seas had long been a part of Japanese life, running a sort of protection racket, taking payments from merchants to 'protect' their shipping. These piratical clans thus evolved into local lords. Some seafarers of the west coast and of islands such as Tushima, became renowned as pirates who raided the Chinese coasts, Korea and the islands of the China seas. These forces actually recruited large numbers of Chinese, islander and Korean nationals – in some cases having only about 20 percent Japanese personnel. They occupied areas of the Korean and Chinese coast and became an ongoing problem for Chinese and Korean forces. They also became allies to the great daimyō in their battles.

Finally, there are bandits. Some bandit forces were made up from deserters from various armies. Others were remnants of defeated forces, uprooted 'Ikko Ikki' or ronin associations. Many managed to gain villages and even towns as bases for their operation. They could organise and become a threat to the forces of warlords.

## Armour

The very elegant and beautiful armours of earlier ages did still exist in the Sengoku period – but only as status symbols for wealthy warlords. The art of producing armour had gone through a metamorphosis in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries as dismounted infantry action spurred a change in armour design. The need to provide armour in ever greater quantities and the need to provide protection against the powerful thrust of yari and the strike of bullets from firearms spurred new styles.

## Colour Patterns

The most common lacquer colour for armour is black. This is the cheapest colour and the small plates and mail sections used to protect the arms will almost always be black.

Other lacquer colours include brown, russet (a rather pleasing orange-red-brown), green, flame orange, scarlet and brilliant crimson. An ostentatious spendthrift might even lacquer their armour in gold.

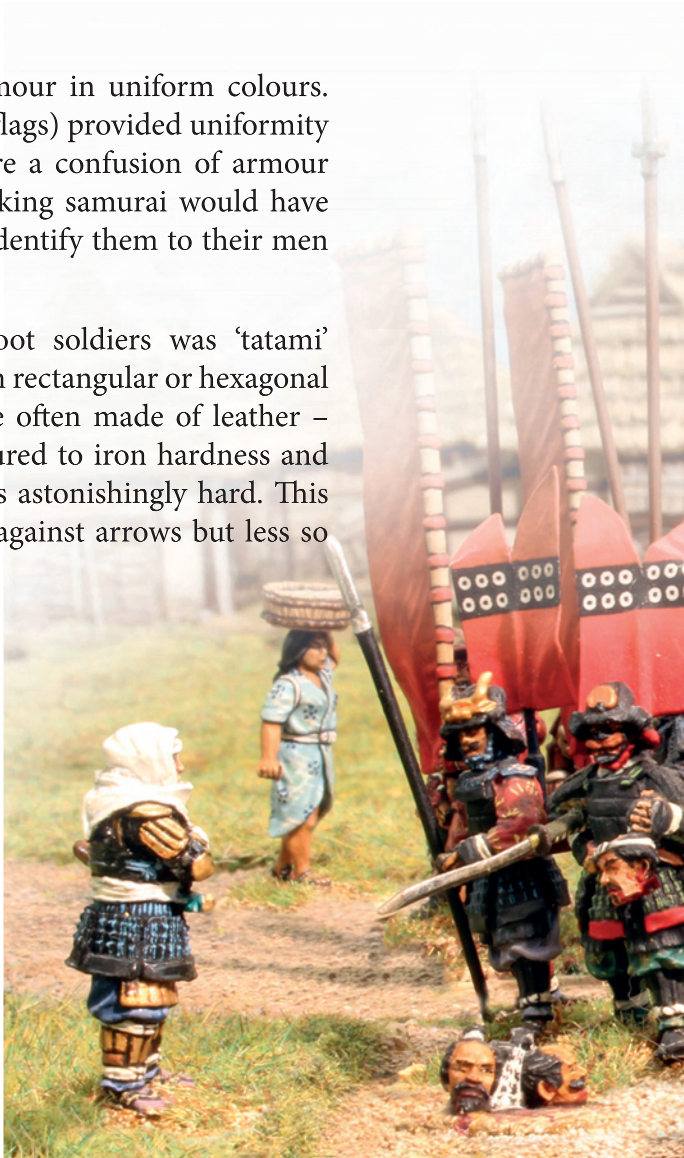
Lacing colours provide an extra dash of colour. Black and dark indigo blue were cheap to produce. White, purple, red, scarlet, green, orange, yellow and brighter blues were also common.

Some solid cuirass styles were also adorned with heraldic 'mon' symbols, or decorative motifs.

Some warlords provided troops with armour in uniform colours. Others did not bother. 'Sashimono' (back flags) provided uniformity and recognition in an environment where a confusion of armour and clothing colours prevailed. High-ranking samurai would have their own distinctive Sashimono to help identify them to their men in combat.

The most common light armour for foot soldiers was 'tatami' armour – a style that used mail links to join rectangular or hexagonal sections of hard plates. These plates were often made of leather – buffalo hide almost a centimetre thick, cured to iron hardness and infused with glue and lacquer until it was astonishingly hard. This provided excellent defence in melee and against arrows but less so against spears. This armour could be complemented by arm defences and by different helmet types.

The most characteristic 'ashigaru' helmet of this period was a broad, conical 'jingasa'. These helmets could be of iron, or of buffalo leather. However, folding versions of the more familiar kabuto were also common – as were simple helms made with a kabuto-style helmet bowl and a neck guard of quilting and mail, or



of tatami armour. There were also taller versions of the jingasa – not as practical, perhaps, but you have to love a man in a big hat!

Other armour styles emphasised strength of the breastplate and speed of manufacture. Armour made from horizontal bands initially mimicked something of the construction of lamellar armours, but then rigid laced and 'tub sided' cuirasses began to appear. The samurai who served on foot would typically have armour that were far more complete than those of the lower classes. Armour for the arms was heavier and there was the addition of shoulder guards, thigh guards and often throat and lower face protection. This armour gave extremely good protection in melee. Some of them have a true elegance and artistic sensibility to their design.

Some 'high status' armours, however, were very baroque in style indeed. Visibility and proclamation of status were a priority for leaders, warlords and samurai who sought to make a name for themselves. There was some very eccentric regalia indeed (which should delight painters and converters out there). There were suits of armour designed to look like aged monks, or ravaged hermits. There were suits designed to look like dragon scale or bark. Helmets bowls were often made in eccentric shapes mimicking various types of head

Heads collected in battle mean rewards! (Perry Miniatures)

gear. More commonly, extravagant crests or covers for helmet bowls made from lacquered paper mâché and leather were constructed. The most extreme-looking of these were never intended for use in combat, but rather made a warlord into a sort of mobile standard that could be seen and recognised by their troops. In the small-scale actions covered by these rules, such extravagant monstrosities are somewhat out of place.

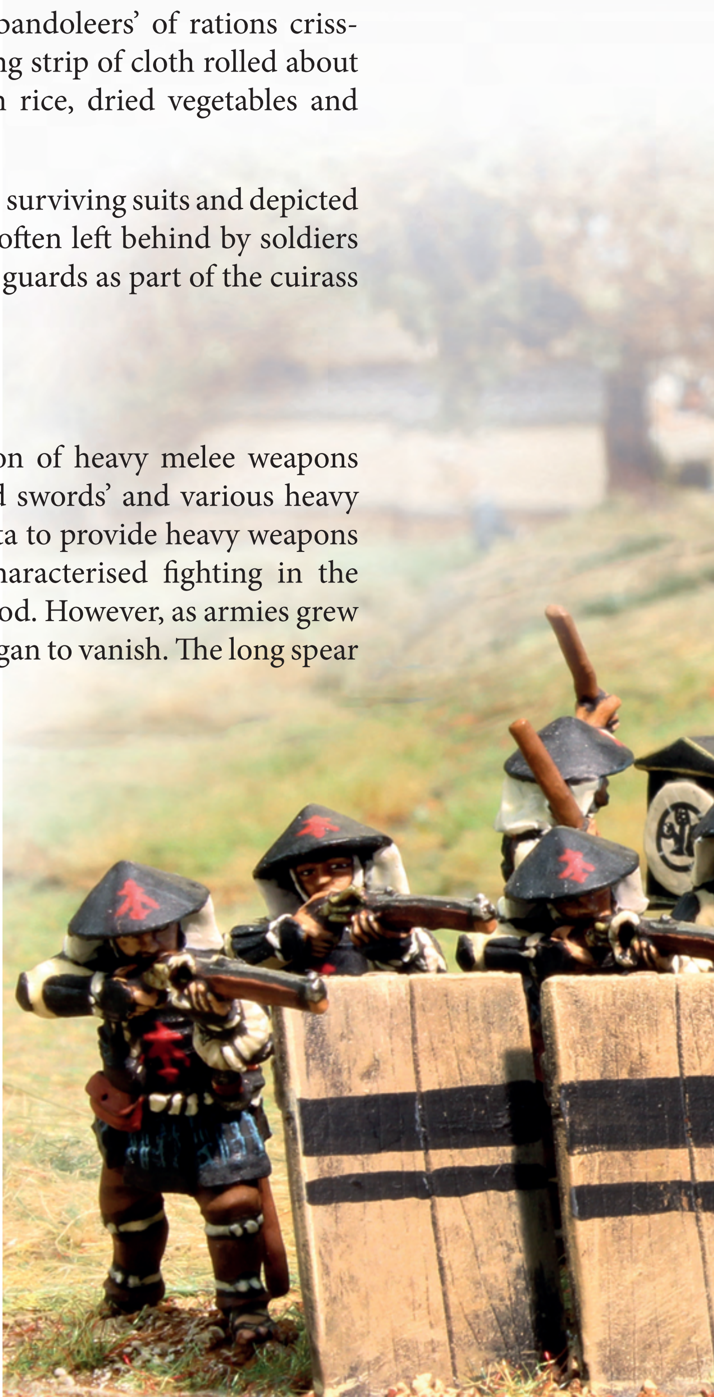
Many troops on campaign will carry 'bandoleers' of rations criss-crossing their body armour. This is a long strip of cloth rolled about sectioned off packets that each contain rice, dried vegetables and dried fish sufficient for a meal.

The heavy 'sode' shoulder guards seen on surviving suits and depicted in the artwork from later periods were often left behind by soldiers on campaign. The inclusion of shoulder guards as part of the cuirass made 'sode' largely redundant.

## Weapons

The fifteenth century saw a proliferation of heavy melee weapons designed for individual combats – 'field swords' and various heavy clubs joined with the traditional naginata to provide heavy weapons in the vicious skirmish battles that characterised fighting in the towns, woods and mountains of the period. However, as armies grew and tactics evolved, all these weapons began to vanish. The long spear became the queen of the battlefield.

The Japanese yari of the era was usually a long, sharp blade mounted upon a shaft at least 12 feet long – although a preferred style for expert spear duellists used a shorter shaft but a much longer blade. The most expensive yari were made by swordsmiths using immense skill – but cheaper versions were easy to produce. The powerful thrust of a yari could penetrate armour or skewer a charging horse. They could be used by tighter formations than the traditional naginata and had far



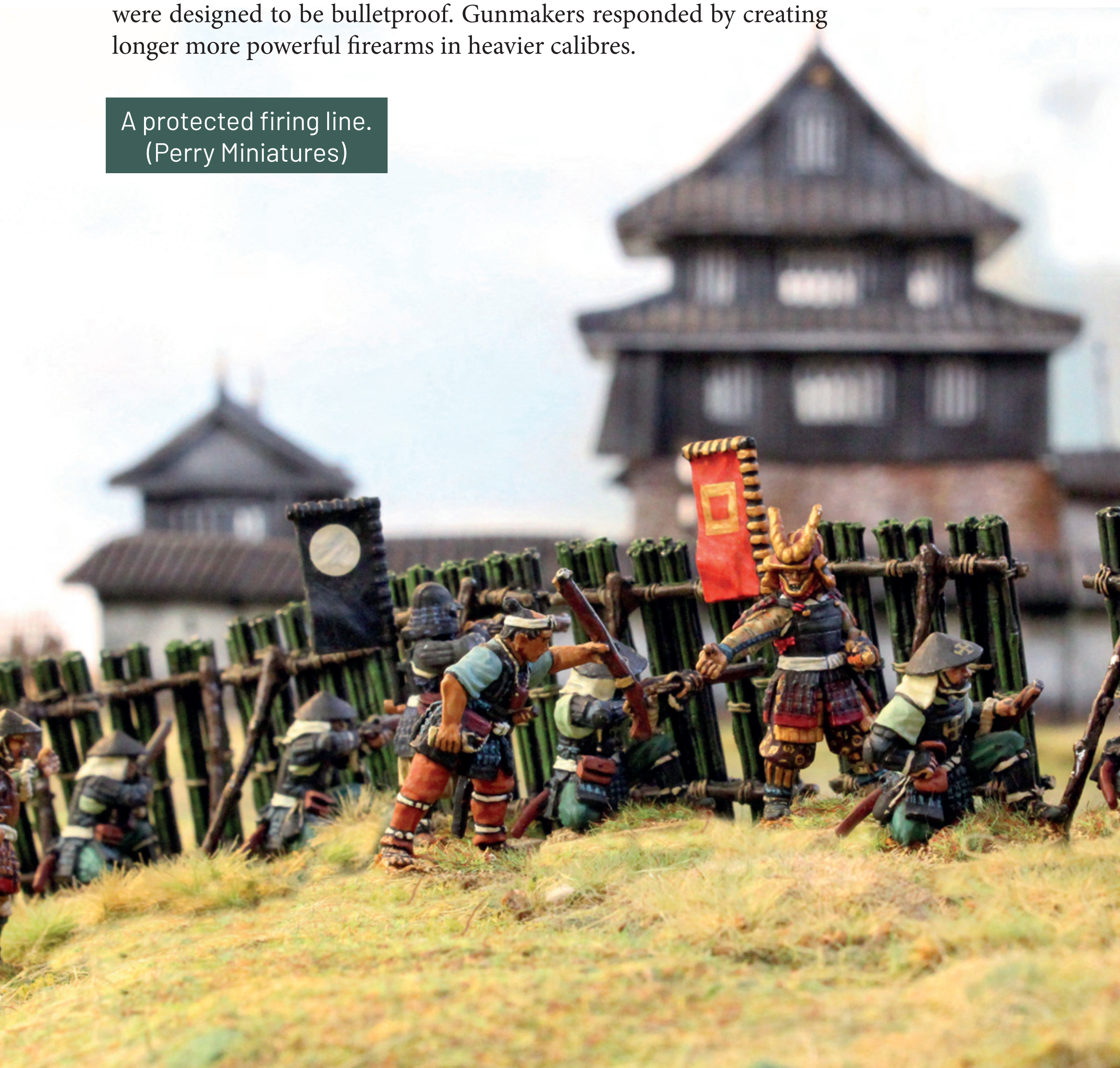
greater reach. Spears were relatively simple to teach troops to use to an acceptable level of competence, but true masters of the spear were deadly warriors. The yari swiftly became the dominant melee weapon. Swords were only used once a warrior's spear had broken – and naginatas ceased to be a significant battlefield weapon.

Some armies adopted extravagantly long yari for use in formal battles, making these weapons more akin to pikes than spears. Some even reached a length of 30 feet! It seems that these weapons proved a tad unwieldy, since we hear of troops cutting them down to a more manageable size. The rough terrain of Japan was no place for dense pike formations and most battle formations were only three or four men deep.

Bows remained in common use as a support weapon. They were useful for pinning enemy formations and sewing chaos and were used as part of a combined arms strategy paired with cavalry and shock infantry. Horse archery had almost vanished in favour of mounted lancers armed with the yari. The role of providing firepower was now moving to a new type of soldier.

A firing line well protected by *tate* pavises. (Perry Miniatures)

Firearms saw a great deal of development during this period. The Japanese ‘ban-zutsu’ were initially copied from a type of arquebus manufactured by the Portuguese in their eastern colonies. It was rapidly modified and proved to be an utterly decisive weapon. Expensive to produce, they were initially adopted only in small numbers. As manufacturing costs came down and tactical deployment was perfected, guns were used in ever increasing numbers. With a longer range than bows, they were able to penetrate armour, mantlets and most simple defences; they were a deadly weapon. Some warlords adopted heavy, sold iron armour breastplates for their troops that were designed to be bulletproof. Gunmakers responded by creating longer more powerful firearms in heavier calibres.



A protected firing line. (Perry Miniatures)

# Timeline

A bird with

One body but

Two beaks,

Pecking itself

To death.

Anonymous poem, 1500 AD

1467 The outbreak of the Onin War plunges Japan into a period of ceaseless civil wars.

1523 Japanese in-fighting results in the Ningbo Incident, bringing trade with China to a halt and resulting in a new wave of Wokou piracy.

1543 The first Europeans, the Portuguese, arrive in Japan, opening the Nanban trade period.

1549 The Jesuit priest Francis Xavier arrives in Kagashima and introduces Christianity to Japan. At least partially motivated by a desire for western firearms and goods, some provincial warlords (daimyō) convert to the new religion.

1553 First Battle of Kawanakajima. The forces of the Takeda clan and the Uesugi clan face each other off in the first of their epic confrontations.

1555 The Second Battle of Kawanakajima. The Takeda and Uesugi clan clash once again.

1557 Third battle of Kawanakajima.

1560 Battle of Okehazama: Oda Nobunaga emerges victorious and establishes a hegemony over the other major warlords of Honshū.

1561 The fourth and bloodiest battle of Kawanakajima takes place. The Takeda casualties are an estimated 62 percent and the Uesugi casualties stood at a staggering 72 percent. The renowned Takeda clan military strategist Yamamoto Kanzuke was slain, as were a great many notable lords and generals.

1568 The military leader Oda Nobunaga, the first daimyō to achieve a dominant position among his rivals, takes control of Kyoto and installs Ashikaga Yoshiaki as the reigning but powerless shōgun

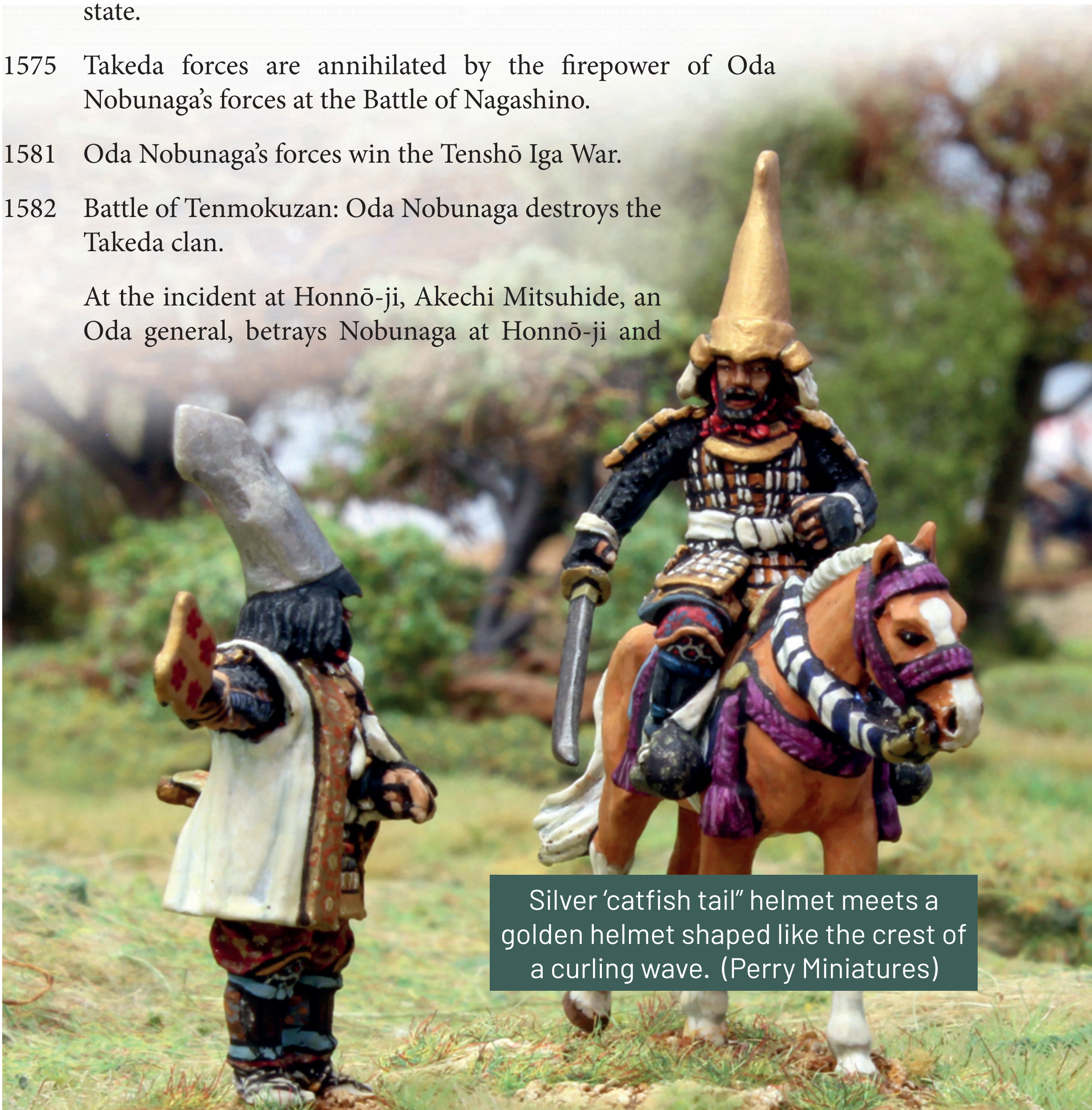
1570 Oda Nobunaga starts a 10-year long Ishiyama Hongan-ji War to suppress the warrior monk community and the Kaga ikki state.

1575 Takeda forces are annihilated by the firepower of Oda Nobunaga's forces at the Battle of Nagashino.

1581 Oda Nobunaga's forces win the Tenshō Iga War.

1582 Battle of Tenmokuzan: Oda Nobunaga destroys the Takeda clan.

At the incident at Honnō-ji, Akechi Mitsuhide, an Oda general, betrays Nobunaga at Honnō-ji and



Silver 'catfish tail" helmet meets a golden helmet shaped like the crest of a curling wave. (Perry Miniatures) forces Nobunaga to commit seppuku. One of Nobunaga's generals, Toyotomi Hideyoshi, seizes power and continues the process of subduing rival warlords.

1585 Toyotomi Hideyoshi invades Shikoku.

1587 Toyotomi Hideyoshi launches the Kyūshū Campaign.

1590 Toyotomi Hideyoshi prevails over the late Hōjō clan in the siege of Odawara in the Kantō region, completing the reunification of Japan.

1591 Toyotomi Hideyoshi conquers the northern part of Honshū island, effectively unifying Japan. To stabilise the country and consolidate his control, he orders men to follow the professions of their fathers, binds the peasants to the land they farm, disarms all non-samurai, mints new coins, standardises weights and measures and exerts control over foreign trade.

1592 Toyotomi Hideyoshi, acting as kampaku (regent) in lieu of Oda Nobukatsu, invades Korea. Although he is forced to retreat in 1593 by Korean naval successes and effective guerrilla fighting, as well as intervention by Chinese troops, the invasion devastates the peninsula.

1596 Toyotomi Hideyoshi invades Korea for the second time. The campaign is marked by atrocities and widespread destruction.

1598 The Japanese invasion of Korea ends with the sudden death of Hideyoshi. The Japanese retreat after the battle of Noryang.

1600 The Battle of Sekigahara is won by forces of Tokugawa Ieyasu.

1603 The Edo period starts after Tokugawa Ieyasu receives the title of shōgun.

1609 Japanese Invasion of the Ryukyu island kingdom.

1615 The siege of Osaka is completed with the Battle of Tennōji. Tokugawa Ieyasu ends Toyotomi opposition to the Tokugawa regime.

# Appendix II

# Media Inspiration

## Films

*'Ran'*, directed by Akira Kurosawa

A glorious remake of 'King Lear', this movie has some excellent battle scenes. The colour and terrain are haunting. Lots of good musketry. The siege scene is spectacular.

*'Kagemusha'* directed by Akira Kurosawa

A very beautiful film, filled with battle scenes. Sieges, battles – and the epic destruction of the Takeda clan at Nagashino. This one is an absolute must.

*'The Seven Samurai'* directed by Akira Kurosawa

The epic battle of a band of villagers led by samurai versus a horde of marauding bandits. This is a true classic. The realistic sword scenes were choreographed by Yoshio Sugino of the Katori Shinto Ryu school of swordsmanship.

*'Throne of Blood'* directed by Akira Kurosawa

A black and white classic. This is a retelling of MacBeth. An excellent yarn.

*'The Hidden Fortress'* directed by Akira Kurosawa

The spear duel scene is excellent (Toshiro Mifune fights using the Katori Shinto Ru yari technique, in which he was an expert). Points given for spotting the similarities between this film and 'Star Wars – a New Hope'.

*'Samurai Banners'* directed by Hiroshi Inagaki

This follows the fortunes of General Yamamoto Kansuke as he serves Takeda Shingen. So – war, battle, confusion and a ridiculous scene with four men wielding a single huge sword. Glee!

*'Heaven and Earth'* directed by Haruki Kadokawa

The battle of Kawanakajima again – only this time from the Uesugi clan's perspective. This is a confusing film, but it sure hired a lot of extras! The armour accuracy is occasionally execrable, but there are some good battle scenes.

*'The Master Spearman'* Directed by Tomu Uchida

An excellent black and white film with an interesting protagonist. Very hard to find this film!

*'The Admiral: Roaring Currents'* directed by Kim Han-Min

Naval combat between the Japanese and Korean fleets.

*'Kingdom of War'* Directed by Chatreechalerm Yukoi

A series of films covering the wars wracking the Siamese Kingdom of Ayuttahya. Watch for samurai forces popping up here and there!

*'Yamada: Way of the Samurai'* Directed by Nopporn Wartin

A samurai's adventures in the Kingdom of Ayuttahya. A very cool martial arts flick.

## Books

*The Lost Samurai – Japanese Mercenaries in South-East Asia, 1593–1688:* Stephen Turnbull

*Naghashino 1575, Slaughter at the Barricades:* Steven Turnbull

*Kawanakajima 1553–1564, Samuri Power Struggle:* Steven Turnbull

*Samurai Heraldry:* Steven Turnbull

*Samurai Commanders:* Steven Turnbull

*Ashigaru 1467–1649, Weapons, Armour, Tactics*: Steven Turnbull

*Samurai invasion – Japan's Korean War,1592–1598:* Steven Turnbull

Steven Turnbull is well known to any westerners with an interest in Japanese history. His work is thorough, well-illustrated and beautifully written.

*Japanese Spears – Polearms and Their Use in Old Japan*: Roald Knutsen

*Tales of the Samurai – Stories of Old Japan (books 1 and 2):* Roald Knutsen

*Tengu: The Shamanic and Esoteric Origins of the Japanese Martial Arts:* Roald Knutsen

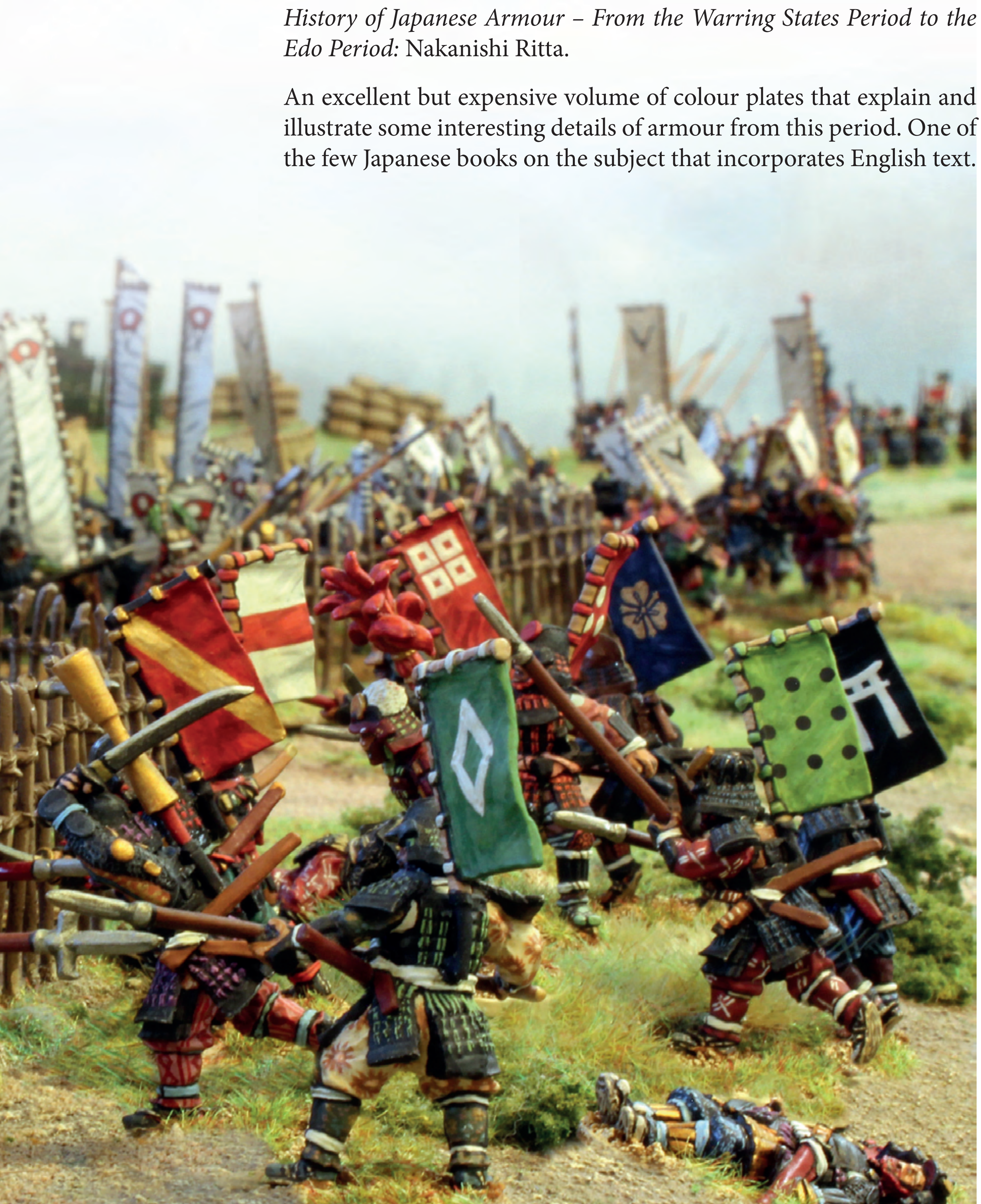
*Rediscovering Budo – From a Swordsman's Perspective:* Roald Knutsen.

Samurai yari clash at the barriers! (Perry Miniatures)

Roald Knutsen is a consummate martial artist, a kendo instructor with the British Kendo Renmei (BKR) and a rather brilliant researcher into the history and origins of Japanese martial arts. His work is filled with some very interesting insights.

*History of Japanese Armour – From the Warring States Period to the Edo Period:* Nakanishi Ritta.

An excellent but expensive volume of colour plates that explain and illustrate some interesting details of armour from this period. One of the few Japanese books on the subject that incorporates English text.



## Appendix III

# Foreign Troops

If players wish, battles may be fought that pit Japanese invasion forces, mercenaries, or pirates against foreign forces. Japanese pirates frequently encountered Ming and Korean troops and the Japanese invasion of Korea saw the Japanese engaged in brutal fighting against the Koreans and their Ming allies. Japanese pirate forces also battled the Spanish in the Philippines and fought as mercenaries for the Kingdom of Siam.

## The Korean Invasion

> In the 1592 invasion, everything was swept away. Within a fortnight or a month, the cities and fortresses were lost and everything in the eight directions had crumbled. Although it was [partly] due to there having been a century of peace and the people not being familiar with warfare that this happened, it was really because the Japanese had the use of muskets that could reach beyond several hundred paces, that always pierced what they struck, that came like the wind and the hail and with which bows and arrows could not compare.
>
> Korean official *Yu Song-nyong*, 1596

> When the troops come [to Korea] from the province of *Kai*, have them bring as many guns as possible, for no other equipment is needed. Give strict orders that all men, even the samurai, carry guns.
>
> *Asano Yoshinaga*,
> in a letter to his father, 1596

> The red-black Japanese armour, iron helmets, horse manes, gold crowns, gold fleece, gold armour, feather dress, feather brooms, shell trumpets and many other curious things, in strange shapes with rich ornaments strike onlookers with awe, like weird ghosts or strange beasts.
>
> Korean admiral *Yi Sun-shin*,
> reporting to King Seonjo after his victory at Okpo, 1592

Japanese pirate bands had attacked the Korean coasts for centuries. Toyotomi Hideyoshi conducted a full invasion of Korea in 1592, with the aim at a later date of conquering all of China and even India! This brutal invasion led to immense loss of life. The Ming Chinese sent aid and military forces to assist the Koreans. War continued to rage until 1598. The last Japanese ships returned to Japan on 24 December 1598, bringing an end to six years of war. Peace negotiations and sporadic fighting continued until 1608.

The bushidan marches out! Only the most well-financed clans could manage a degree of uniformity. (Perry Miniatures)

## Korean Forces

The Koreans at this point operate a mixture of units. There are armed guerrillas from the population (the 'Righteous Army') and there are formal garrison and militia units. Most of these groups are usually unarmoured infantry. Some of the better equipped militia and garrison units, however, wear armour of leather plate and brigantine – 'pengbaesu' – with metal helmets. This is classed as light armour. Shaolin monks provide a highly skilled source of unarmoured units.

The main royal 'armies of the capital' include peasant infantry equipped with light armour and elite units outfitted in metal brigantines that are classed as heavy armour. Korean armour does not include armour in the 'bulletproof' category.

All these infantry groups include archers and close combat troops armed with a combined arms mixture of spears, tridents and polearms supported by swordsmen that we shall classify as 'yari'. Some units rely upon swords and shields for close combat – these class as 'heavy melee weapons' and are useful in the defence of rough terrain and towns.

"A mountain does not move".
(Perry Miniatures)

Korean cavalry relied heavily upon armoured horse archer units. A minority of cavalry operated as shock cavalry armed with halberds, spears, flails and tridents that we shall classify as 'yari'.

There are also native Korean and nomad light cavalry – unarmoured cavalry armed with bows. Koreans had access to a handgun called the seungja ('victory gun') – a shotgun-like hand cannon attached to a staff. It was far more primitive than Japanese firearms. A few more advanced weapons came into their hands via the Ming, but these should never be more than a single base within a firearms unit.

Koreans developed some very interesting artillery weapons during this period. These include extremely effective rocket batteries that proved decisive in positional warfare and formal battles. Handheld multiple rocket projectors can be used to equip 'heroes'; in the same way Japanese heroes can fire o-zutsu. Rather than breaking gates, 'fire arrow' launchers will set fire to areas of village one D.U. square on a roll of three or less on 1D6. Units that in areas that are on fire must either evacuate the area or take a casualty.

## 'Ryu' Choices and Training

Korean troops were often highly skilled archers but were poorly trained in melee combat. They were very nervous of Japanese abilities as swordsmen. Korean units roll one less dice than Japanese troops in melee combat. By way of compensation, they gain a starting points budget 20 percent higher than Japanese forces.

When designing their 'ryu' Korean forces may not take points in 'fire' (Ferocity). Their metal element can be no higher than one point during the first invasion. After the first invasion, resistance stiffens and experience grows, 'metal' may be raised to a maximum of three.

There must be two cavalry units organised as heavy archers for each cavalry unit organised as shock cavalry.

Korean forces may field only a single handgun unit. Only one base of the unit may be equipped with 'ban-zutsu' style firearms. The rest must be handguns.

Korean archer units may be equipped with a single volley of 'fire arrows' (arrows with bombs attached to the shafts).

## Ming Chinese

Japanese operating in Korea, or Japanese pirate groups raiding or operating from Chinese islands and coasts may well encounter the forces of Ming China. These Chinese troops were often seasoned in battle from warfare against both Mongols and coastal pirates. Their command system was often rife with factional infighting and bureaucracy. They were also often just as savage as the Japanese, failing to distinguish between civilian Korean populations and Japanese collaborators. They did, however, have excellent strategic and organisational skills.

## Ming Forces

Ming troops rely upon combined arms forces. Units were designated as hand gunners, archers armed with crossbows, archers armed with bows, fire arrow troops, spearmen and swordsmen. The cavalry operated largely as mounted, armoured archers. Nomad light cavalry (unarmoured horse archers) were also available. Most foot soldiers were equipped with light armour of hardened leather paired with metal helmets. Armoured cavalry had heavier metal armour. Ming matchlocks were based upon European models. They used volley fire methods, often kneeling to fire and load.

## ‘Ryu’ Choices and Training

Ming troops must have at least two points in ‘water’ (cunning) element. They may not have points in ‘fire’ (ferocity) element.

Only one unit in a Ming force may be equipped with firearms. To counter the feared Japanese swordsmen, various types of formations known as ‘Mandarin Duck Formation’ were used (other variants were also adopted against nomads). These used multiple ranks of troops – often with an armoured, shielded front rank of swordsmen (usually also equipped with javelins) who were assisted by troops who wielded a ‘wolf brush’ (a multi-branched polearm designed to block and entangle opponents). Rear support was provided from a pair of pikemen.

This is best simulated as a formation with melee troops acting in two ranks. The front rank can be raised to ‘heavily armoured status’ by virtue of their shields. The rear rank are pikemen. The formation will count as ‘yari armed’ only if it remains in a formation that keeps the pikes in rear support. Units in ‘Mandarin Duck Formation’ roll one extra dice when receiving a charge but roll one less dice when making a charge. Chinese troops can form larger, six-base formations that place a rank of crossbowmen or archers behind the melee troops. These archers can fire to the unit’s front.

Heroes may be armed with a ‘crouching tiger cannon’ in the same manner as a Japanese hero may have an o-zutsu. These weapons are a small cannon loaded with 100 musket bullets that fire as a giant shotgun. The weapon only has a range of two D.U.s but causes a casualty on an enemy unit on a score of three or less on 1D6. Alternatively, heroes may be armed with a ‘jingal’ – a long, large calibre firearm that shoots exactly as an o-zutsu.

## Siam and Burma

The Japanese adventurer Yamada Nagamasa gained considerable influence in the Ayutthaya kingdom in Siam (modern day Thailand). A samurai who led trading expeditions to the far east, he based himself in Siam and is believed to have acted as a privateer attacking Dutch shipping in and around Batavia (he is even rumoured to have buried his treasure somewhere on the Eastern coast of Australia!).

Other Japanese contingents began to arrive in Siam. Large numbers of Ronin whose families had been on the losing side of the wars against Tokugawa Ieyasu came in search of employment. There was also a flood of Christian Japanese who were fleeing the repression of Christianity in Japan. Entire Japanese colonies settled in Ayuttahya. Japanese military expertise was so valued that the Ayutthayan kingdom created a ‘Department of Japanese Military Volunteers’ in its administration.

Namasa became the governor of Nakhon si Thammarat province in the Malay peninsula of what is now Thailand. He campaigned at the head of Japanese forces flying a Japanese flag in the name of the king of Ayutthaya. He was finally poisoned in a court intrigue in 1630. Japanese troops continued to be active in the area for some decades after, eventually blending in with local populations.

## Siamese and Burmese Forces

Japanese forces operating in the area can include local troops and local Burmese troops are their opponents. Japanese forces can include local Thai elements.

Native Ayutthayan troops and Burmese troops were divided between infantry swordsmen, spearmen and archers, supported by cavalry and elephantry. Most foot soldiers were unarmoured. 'Court' soldiers and upper-class soldiers wore 'war coats' lined with hardened leather, or scale armour – sometimes with mail to protect the sleeves. These count as 'light armour'. Imported Portuguese plate armour was popular amongst the upper classes.

Locally made firearms, firearms from Malacca and imported Portuguese and Dutch firearms were in use. The troops were trained by European mercenaries to a high state of proficiency. These weapons count as ban-zutsu and can be upgraded to chu-zutsu. Cavalry were armed with spears and often wore light armour. Some of these wore enough mail and imported metal plate armour to raise them to 'heavy armoured' status. There were some other interesting mercenary forces in the armies of Ayutthaya. Portuguese gunners, pikemen (usually fighting with half-pikes equivalent to yari), arquebusiers and musketeers (equivalent to chu-zutsu) and even a small contingent of Ottomans!

Close melee at spearpoint. (Perry Miniatures)

### Elephants!

The great glory of these forces, of course, comes from fielding elephants. They are gorgeous to paint and the chance to render opponents two-dimensional is always welcome. Surviving paintings of the Japanese forces include elephants in the mix, since the Japanese ended up acting as part of the King's Royal Guard.

Elephants can be represented by an elephant model on a suitably deep base. It should have a few infantry escorts on the base. Elephants receive two saving dice per base against all missile weapons. Cavalry gain no bonus against elephants. In addition, non-elephants are automatically disordered whenever they are contacted by elephants. War elephants gain +2 dice per base in melee combat. Elephants move at infantry speeds. They are otherwise treated as cavalry.

If an elephant unit routs, it flees straight backwards for one normal moves. Any troops within this zone are immediately disordered and take a casualty on a roll of three or less on 1D6.

Elephants cost 20 points per base.

### 'Ryu' Choices and Training

Burmese and Siamese troops can have any 'ryu' design choices desired. Thai troops were renowned for their ferocity.

## Spanish in the Philippines

> The Japanese are the most belligerent people here. They bring artillery and many arquebusiers and pikemen. They wear body armour. All provided from the works of the Portuguese, whom they have shown to them for the detriment of their souls.
>
> *Gonzalo Ronquillo*,
> Governor-General of the Philippines
> writing to King Philip II on 16 June 1582

By the 1570s Japanese traders were active in the Philippines at Luzon, exchanging Japanese silver for gold and for highly valued cargos of deerskins. However, in 1580, a Japanese pirate fleet forced the natives of Cagayan on Luzon into submission. They used their new harbour as a base for pirate raids against Spanish shipping. The Spanish Governor-General commissioned captain Juan Pablo de Carrión, of the Spanish navy, to deal with the piracy.

## Wokou Forces

Japanese Wokou forces included ferocious ronin, as well as many Filipino and Chinese pirates. There was no cavalry present. Wokou were notably fierce. Given a terrain predominance of villages, reeds, rough terrain and so forth, heavy melee weapons were common. Wokou had Japanese ronin equipped with firearms, with o-zutsu and yari. Ronin were often well armoured. Chinese pirates also may have had light armour – although many bloodthirsty pirates might well have been happy to operate in very little protective gear.

## ‘Ryu’ and Training.

Wakou forces were renowned for ferocity, speed and cunning. We might be accurate if we said that discipline as not a strongpoint – but they showed a great deal of endurance in renewing attacks.

## Filipino Warriors

Local Filipino troops were renowned for their ambush tactics. They were armed with sword and spears, though some could have locally made copies of Spanish arquebuses and muskets, or the efficient ‘Java arquebus’ (all counting as ban-zusu). ‘Astinggal’ or ‘istinggar’ (a type of long, powerful, accurate musket made by local Islamic Sultanates) do not yet seem to have appeared this far south. We can class the normal regional melee gear of swords, javelins and shields as ‘heavy melee weapons’.

The Spanish referred to Visayan troops as ‘pintados’, or ‘painted ones’ due to the extensive ritual tattoos worn by the Filipino warrior castes.

Filipinos made extensive use of armour. Sometimes this was Visayan chain mail and metal cuirasses or Chinese helmets. More often corselets and helmets were made of elephant hide, shark skin, carabao horn, ebony and hardened buffalo hide. They were combined with excellent shields. Filipino warriors armed in this manner would be classed as wearing light armour.

### 'Ryu' and Training

Filipino troops were renowned for their ferocity in melee and their skill at launching ambush. This might be well represented by cunning, 'fire' (speed) and metal.

## Spanish Forces

Spanish forces consisted of arquebusiers, musketeers, pikemen, with perhaps some small units of halberdiers. About half the Spanish pikemen at this period are armoured (light armour, or heavy armour if wearing full half-plate). Rear ranks in Europe usually went without protection.

The Spanish firearms troops in the battles at Cagayan were noted as having great skill. This may simply have been due to lack of ammunition amongst the wakou. Spanish arquebusiers and musketeers in Europe were normally unarmoured. However, in colonial conditions and faced with the arrows and darts of locals, they may well have adopted light armour of jacks or of locally manufactured kit.

### 'Ryu' and Training.

Spanish forces are well disciplined, stalwart and skilled. Speed might not be a strongpoint!

## The Japanese Invasion of Ryukyu

The Ryukyu archipelago consists of more than 100 islands, stretching southwest through the ocean between Japan and Taiwan. The capital of the kingdom was on the main island of Okinawa.

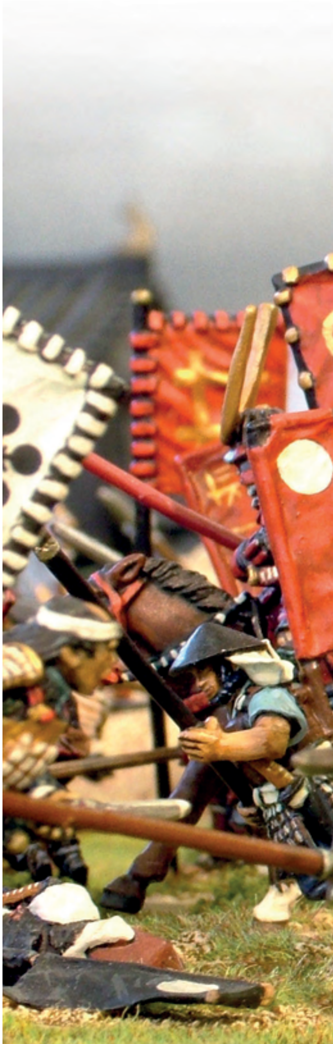
The Ryukyuan kingdom was a sovereign entity, but the Japanese rulers of the Kyushu province of Satsuma had long claimed sovereignty over the Ryukyun Islands. However, they lacked any ability to try and enforce their claims. The Ming considered the kingdom to be a ‘tributary kingdom’ and the islands grew rich with trade from China, Japan, Korea, Malaya and Siam. The Ming greatly praised the civilisation and education of the Ryukyuan emissaries to their court.

The Japanese Shimazu clan who had long ruled Satsma and its surrounding provinces suffered many losses during the Korean invasions. Furthermore, they backed the wrong horse at the battle of Sekigahara and Hidetada and were in dire straits. They looked to the Ryukyuan Island as a possible new source of wealth to repair their fortunes.

By 1609, the new Shōgun, Tokugawa Hidetada chafed at Ryukyu’s failure formally to submit to the shogunate. Given permission to invade, the Satsuma assembled an invasion army and launched an amphibious assault. In a month-long campaign of battle, storm and siege, the Japanese forces overwhelmed large Ryukyun forces and conquered the kingdom.

## Ryukyuan Forces

At the time of the invasion, Ryukyu forces had not fought land engagements for over 200 years and were outmatched by Japanese military technology. The Ryukyuan military had access to handguns (primitive tri-barrelled pole guns and handguns). Their forces used a mixture of Chinese and Japanese weapons, including Japanese swords, spears, Chinese bows, short swords and polearms. Their upper-caste warriors were well trained in ‘Te’, the Ryukyun martial art that eventually evolved into Karate, but the bulk of the army were armed mariners and conscripted peasants. The warrior caste had access to light armour. Peasant conscripts are unlikely to have much in the way of armour protection. Peasant units must be a minimum of two thirds of the numerical strength of the army.



## Training and ‘Ryu’

Ryukyuan peasant troops are badly trained, with a training level of 1 being typical. Warrior cast are training level 2.

Ryukyuans were stubborn – so perhaps a good ‘metal’ element is indicated. Their use of ploys such as venomous snakes indicates a degree of cunning.

Missile Weapons of Foreign Contingents:

| Weapon | Short range | Long range | Points cost |
|---|---|---|---|
| Handgun: | 0-1 D.U. | 3 D.U.s | 1 point |
| Crossbows | 0-2 D.U.s | 4 D.U.s | 1 point |
| Fire arrows | As bow | As bow | 1 point per volley |

Fire arrows give +1 dice to the missile fire of each base.

Crossbows are unaffected by light armour.

Crossbow units require two order chits to activate for firing. The uppermost chit remains the element of the order.

The battle rages! (Perry Miniatures)

## Japanese Banners

The personal banners of force commanders can take many strange shapes. They were keen to identify themselves to their troops.

- *Katō Kiyomasa*: At the Battle of Shizugatake in 1583, Kiyomasa showed immense skill with his cross bladed spear in hand-to-hand combat. He cut down so many men that he had their severed heads salted. The heads were tied to a stalk of green bamboo and carried by one of Katō's attendants into battle.
- *Kakizaki Kageie*: A gold mantis on a blue field (though the clan's sashimono was a half-eaten radish on a red field!).
- *Sassa Narimasa*: Three layers of hats with a bar passed through them.
- *Ii Naomasa*: A gold flytrap with red tassels.
- *Shibata Katsuie*: A gold gohei (a wand tipped with strips of paper).
- *Mori Terumoto*: Bird feathers under a white camel

### Sashimono – 'Back Flags'

These flags gave some uniformity to troops in battle, allowing their affiliation to be seen from a distance. While most troops wear Sashimono tastefully decorated with the clan's mon, many important persons or higher families had rather unique devices. Some other examples include:

- *Ookubo* brothers: All eight Ookkubo brothers wore large 3D sashimono of swallowtail butterflies. Ookkubo Tadayo and Ookubo Tadataka commanded the gunners at the battle of Anegawa river and Nagashino. Oda Nobunage remarked very favourably about their bright sashimono and applauded their work.

- *Magara Naotaka*: This man's sashimono was a circular silver mirror suspended within a red flag.
- *Watanabe Kindayuu*: This man's sashimono was a bright red umbrella, from which dangled dozens of 'prayer papers'. These included paper strips autographed by famous personalities such as Oda Nobnaga (whose paper said Watanabe was '*The First Spear of Japan*').
- *Kani Saizu*: Saizu wore a bunch of green leafed bamboo as a sashimono. When he cut off an opponent's head in battle, he left a spring of bamboo leaves in their mouths as a sign of ownership.
- *Ochiai Saheji*: This warrior wore the image of a crucified man as his sashimono. The enemy warrior Tori Suneemon had escaped a castle under siege to try and summon reinforcements. When Suneemon was captured, he was tortured and crucified, but refused to give up any information. Impressed by his enemy's flawless bravery, Saheji requested of Suneemon that he be allowed to use his image as a flag, so that some good lesson might come of the man's courage. Sumeemon gave his permission.
- *Sakibara Yasumasa*: Three golden kasa hats threaded on a pole.
- *Matsuda Kinshichirou*: A pole topped with gilded deer Antlers. Behind it is a horizontal ring at shoulder height, from which rises a ring of giant white feathers.
- *Ishikawa Kazumasa*: A 3D golden iris flower surrounded by gentian violets, with a plume of yak hair beneath.

## As an aside: Fashion dictating function!

In the Katori Shinto Ryu school, there is a special sword cut, 'Makauchi-men'. This cut is designed to allow a warrior to make a powerful downward cut without accidentally entangling themselves with their helmet crest or sashimono!

# Quick Reference Sheet

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## Movement Distances

Cavalry – charge move: 6 D.U.s

Cavalry – normal move: 4 D.U.s

Infantry – charge move: 4 D.U.s

Infantry – running: 4 D.U.s

Infantry – walking: 3 D.U.s

Impeded movement, woods and bushes or crossing streams: 3 D.U.s.

Bad footing: 2 D.U.s

Infantry units in heavy armour may run only once in each battle. Infantry units wearing bulletproof armour may not run.

Units that carry pavises may neither run nor make a charge move.

Units that carry bulletproof pavises may move a maximum of 2 D.U. per turn.

Missile ranges:

| | Close range | Long range |
|---|---|---|
| Cavalry bows: | 0–2 D.U.s. | 3 D.U.s. |
| Infantry bows: | 0–2 D.U.s. | 4 D.U.s. |
| Ban-zutsu: | 0–3 D.U.s. | 5 D.U.s. |
| Other firearms: | 0–3 D.U.s. | 6 D.U.s. |

## Attack Roll

Units that fire missile weapons roll two dice for each base that may fire.

To score a hit, a dice must roll a score equal or less than the firing unit’s training level.

‘Elite’ units may re-roll any dice that score a 6.

### Effects on Enemy Movement

If a unit receives equal or more hits at this point than its ryu has metal element, its movement is halted.

### Saving Roll

Saving rolls succeed on a dice score of 1–3 on each dice.
The attacker has one casualty or more for each of its bases: 1 dice.
The attacker is disordered: 2 dice.
Unit is fired at from long range: 2 dice.
Defender is lightly armoured vs bows: 1 dice.
Defender is heavily armoured vs bows: 2 dice.
Defender equipped with bulletproof armour vs ban-zutsu: 1 dice.
Defending unit is infantry firing using a skirmish order: 1 dice.
Defending unit is infantry using a 'firing wave' order: 1 dice.
Unit is protected by pavises and fired on by bows: 2 dice.
Unit is protected by a stone wall or bulletproof pavises: 2 dice.

### Results

Subtract the number of successful saving throws from the number of successful hits.
First point: Target is disordered.
Each subsequent point: Target loses one casualty.

### Check for Leader and Hero Casualties

If a unit suffers two or more casualties, roll 1D6 for each attached character. On a score of 6, the character is removed from play.

### Melee

Roll attack dice. To score a hit, a dice must roll a score equal or less than the unit's training level.
Bases that have contacted enemy with their frontal facing will roll two dice.
Bases that are in contact with enemy to their flanks or rear faces roll only one dice.
If a unit's order chit has an advantage against the element of its opponent's order chit, then the unit with the advantage gains two additional attack dice.
*Ferocity* (Fire element): Fire has an advantage against Wood (prudence)
*Prudence* (Wood element): Wood has an advantage against Earth (discipline)
*Discipline* (Earth element): Earth has an advantage against Wind (speed)
*Speed* (Wind element): Wind has an advantage against Water (cunning)
*Cunning* (Water element): Cunning has an advantage against Fire (ferocity)
Heavier armour than opponent: +1 dice per base.

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Yari vs other weapons, except when the yari unit is inside a village, woods, or bamboo groves: +1 dice per base.

Heavy melee weapons vs other weapons in village, woods, or bamboo grove: +1 dice per base.

Mounted troops vs infantry that are not in tight formation, provided neither are in a village, woods or bamboo grove: +1 dice per base.

Facing an enemy unit that has one or more casualties per template: +1 dice per base.

Enemy is disordered: +1 dice per base.

Yari-armed base that has another friendly yari-armed base directly behind in corner-to-corner contact and facing in the same direction, except when either base is disordered, is inside bad footing, a village, woods, or bamboo grove: +1 per base.

If a base is in contact with an enemy and has an unengaged base of their own troops beside it and in base-to-base contact while flanking the enemy: +1 to the engaged base.

Infantry fighting vs cavalry while in either are in bad footing, woods, bamboo groves, scrub, or village: +1 dice per base.

Infantry defending a linear feature such as a stream or wall: +1 dice per base.

If a unit has their C-in-C or leader attached: +1 dice.

For each hero attached to a unit: +1 dice. (Except for a hero armed with an o-zutsu).

## Calculating the Melee Winner

The unit that has the highest hit total wins the melee.

In a tie, each unit takes one casualty for every two hits rolled with their attack dice.

Otherwise, each side takes casualties equal to the hits rolled by the other side.

A unit that loses a melee makes an immediate retreat of 3 D.U.s away from the enemy for infantry, or 5 D.U.s away for cavalry.

All units involved in a melee are disordered at the end of the movement activation.

If a unit takes two or more casualties in a melee, then roll 1D6 for each attached character. A character is slain or injured and removed from play on a score of 1 or 2.

## Characters vs Characters

All duels are fought one-on-one. Characters roll three dice, scoring hits on three or less with each dice. The character that scores the most hits, slays their opponents.

## Fire Activations

- Command chit: Command chits can give a unit a ‘stand and fire’ command.
- Ferocity (Fire element) – Fire and storm:

  The unit’s fire at its target is made with the target receiving +2 saving dice. The firers then charge into melee combat.
- Prudence (Wood element) – Reserved volleys:

  If the unit has already fired during this turn, it may still perform opportunity fire if it is charged. The enemy will receive +2 saving dice.
- Discipline (Earth element) – Firing wave (‘Sashiya’):

The unit may advance or retire 1 D.U. before it shoots, with no penalty.

The unit gains an extra saving dice vs missile fire if it is not behind a wall.

- Cavalry – Circling fire:

  The unit must remain stationary – but all fire from the unit counts as taking place at 'close range'.

  The unit gains an extra saving dice vs missile fire.

- Speed (Wind element) – Rapid fire:

  Each base fires at +1 dice. At the end of the firing phase, the unit is disrupted.

- Passing Fire:

  A cavalry unit may make a full move, and fire at any point of the move.

- Cunning (Water element) – Skirmish:

  The unit gains one extra saving dice vs missile fire, but conversely their targets gain +1 saving dice vs the skirmishers.

  If an enemy unit attempts to charge, the skirmishers may evade back by one full move if the controlling player pays one extra order chit. Enemies that charge and fail to contact will become disordered. Skirmishers take a penalty of -1 dice in melee.

- Skirmishing Cavalry:

  Cavalry units armed with bows can be ordered to skirmish. If an enemy unit attempts to charge, the skirmishers may evade back by one full move if the controlling player pays one extra order chit. Enemies that charge and fail to contact will become disordered.

### Movement Activations

- Command chit: The unit may perform a standard move. This can include a charge if wished.
- Ferocity (Fire element) – Ferocious charge:

  The unit will fight against its target gaining a bonus of +1 dice per base.

  If the unit should fail the ensuing melee, the unit will take one additional casualty per base.

- Prudence (Wood element) – Reserves:

  If the unit engages in melee this turn, it is not disordered at the end of combat.

- Discipline (Earth element): Cavalry do not gain a +1 advantage when attacking infantry who use this order.
- Speed (Wind element) – Swift move:

  The unit moves with great speed, running/cantering. The unit moves three additional D.U.s

- Cunning (Water element) – Wedge or tight column attack:

  A unit that charges an enemy line in wedge/attack column formation does not count as flanked by overlapping bases on either side of its points of contact.

  Wedges/attack columns are vulnerable to enemy fire. Units that make opportunity fire against them gain +1 attack dice.

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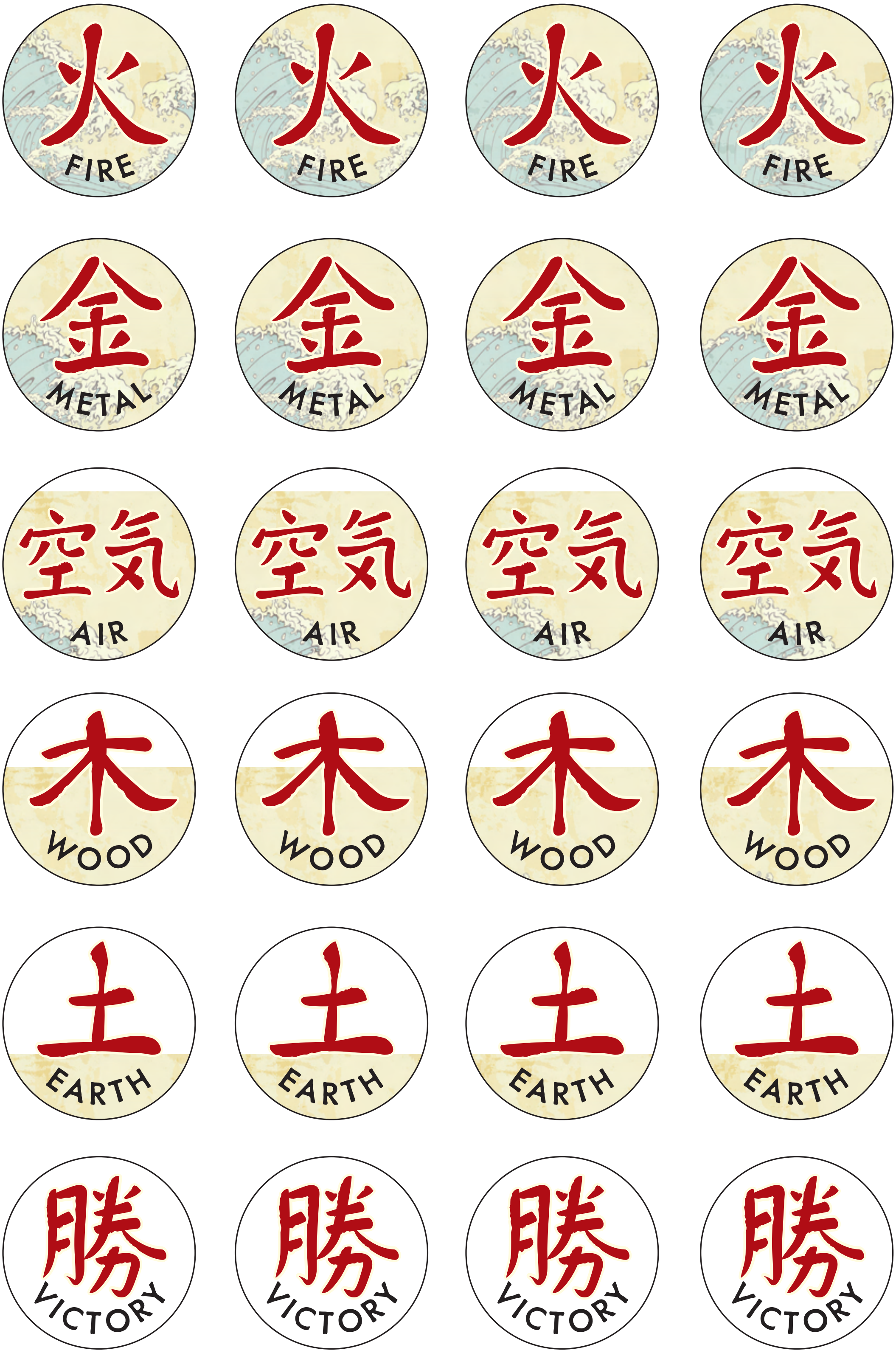
# ELEMENTAL ORDER AND VICTORY TOKENS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## About the Author

Pauli Kidd is an author, games designer and historian from Perth, Australia. Her fascination with Japanese culture and martial arts began back in the 1960s as she watched the adventures of 'Shintaro the Samurai' on TV. Japanese history then became a lifelong passion.

Pauli is a 20-year student of the Katori Shinto Ryu, one of the oldest surviving schools of samurai fighting arts. She studied the long sword, short sword, naginata, staff and 12-foot spear, as well as thrown weapons and tactical manuals. Pauli is also a student of kendo, jukendo and tankendo. She has attended Kawanakajima re-enactments in Japan, serving with the teppo (matchlock) corps. She is also a researcher into Japanese magic, legend and occultism.

Pauli made her first Japanese armour (an eleventh century style o-yoroi) when she was 17.

'Samurai-wise' – She is also a co-designer of the 'Monogatari' role playing game by Chaosium. Amongst her many dozens of novels in print is the 'Spirit Hunters' series, following the adventures of a group of would-be monster hunters in medieval Japan.

Pauli's Games review channel 'Lace and Steel' runs on YouTube.

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# BUSHIDAN

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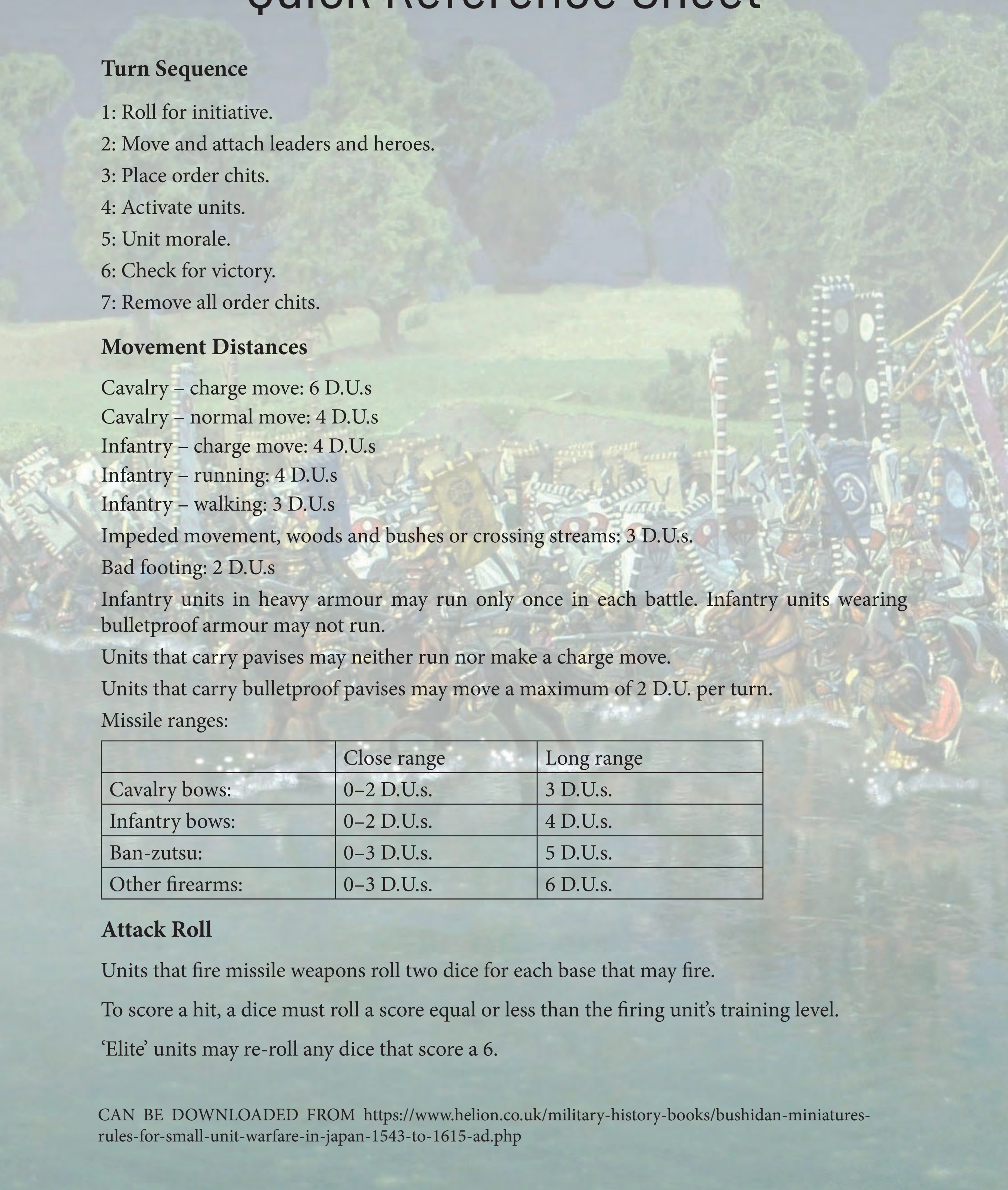

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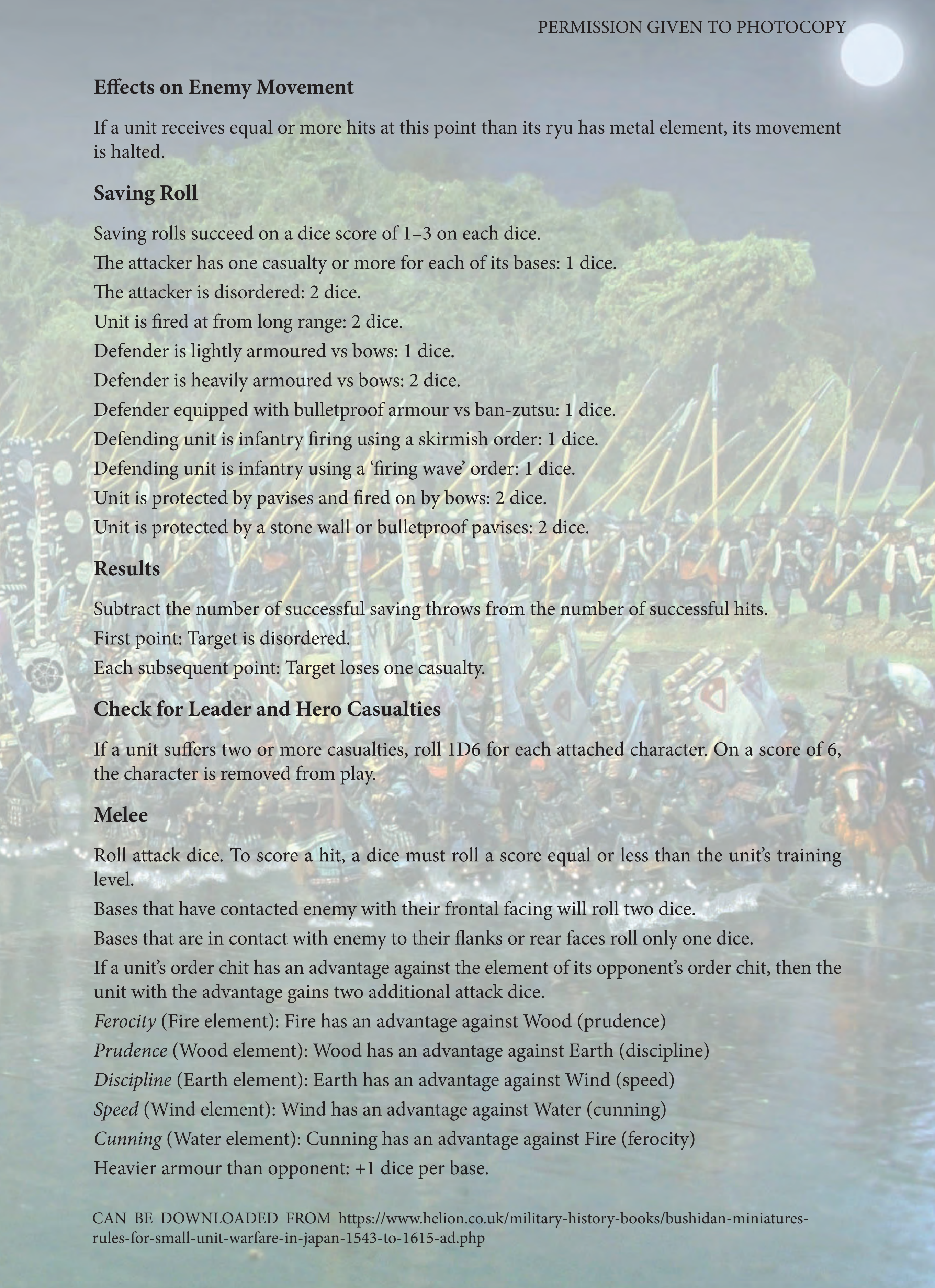

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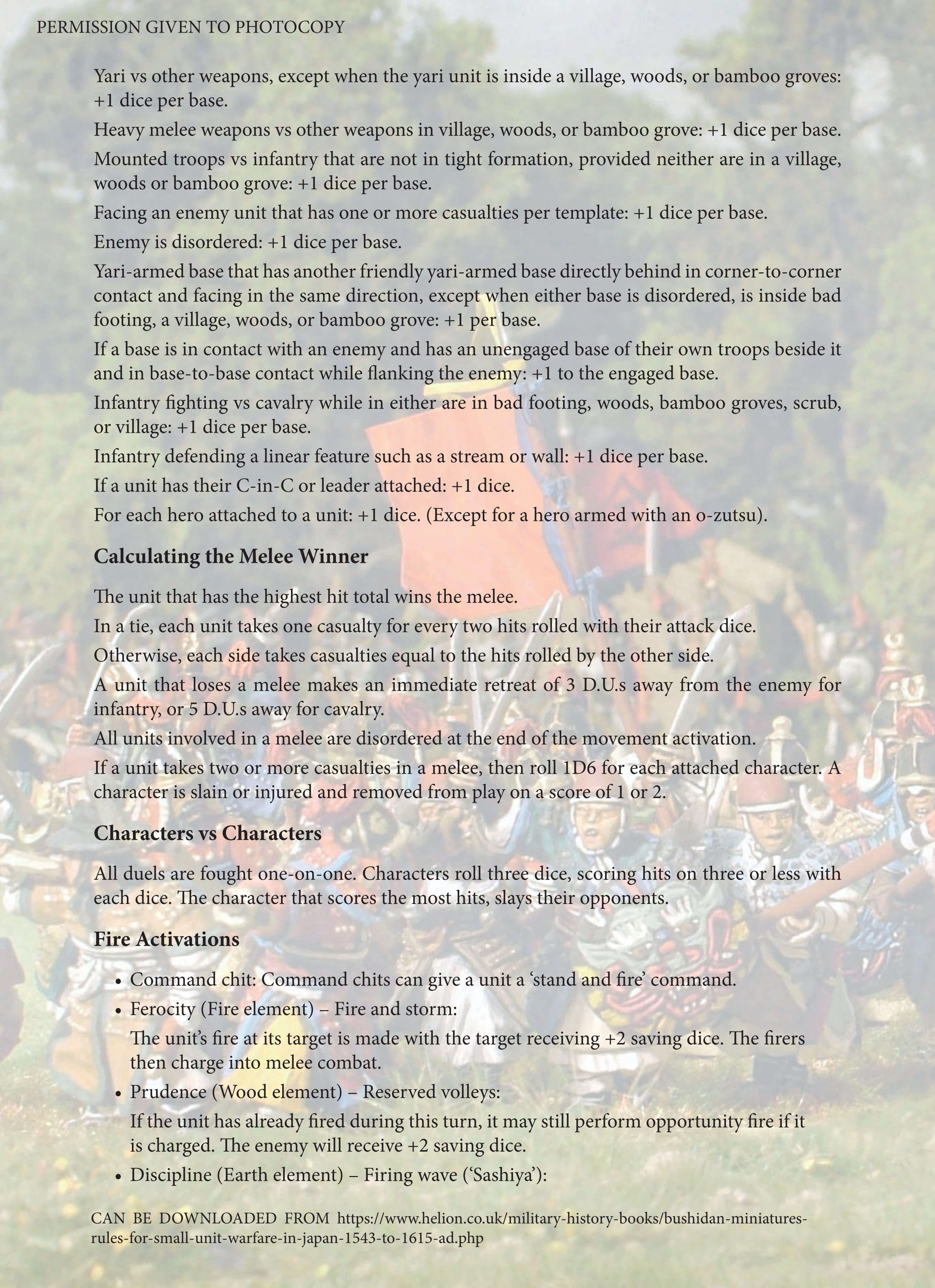

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Otherwise, each side takes casualties equal to the hits rolled by the other side.

A unit that loses a melee makes an immediate retreat of 3 D.U.s away from the enemy for infantry, or 5 D.U.s away for cavalry.

All units involved in a melee are disordered at the end of the movement activation.

If a unit takes two or more casualties in a melee, then roll 1D6 for each attached character. A character is slain or injured and removed from play on a score of 1 or 2.

### Characters vs Characters

All duels are fought one-on-one. Characters roll three dice, scoring hits on three or less with each dice. The character that scores the most hits, slays their opponents.

### Fire Activations

- Command chit: Command chits can give a unit a 'stand and fire' command.
- Ferocity (Fire element) – Fire and storm:

  The unit's fire at its target is made with the target receiving +2 saving dice. The firers then charge into melee combat.
- Prudence (Wood element) – Reserved volleys:

  If the unit has already fired during this turn, it may still perform opportunity fire if it is charged. The enemy will receive +2 saving dice.
- Discipline (Earth element) – Firing wave ('Sashiya'):

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The unit may advance or retire 1 D.U. before it shoots, with no penalty.

The unit gains an extra saving dice vs missile fire if it is not behind a wall.

- Cavalry – Circling fire:

  The unit must remain stationary – but all fire from the unit counts as taking place at 'close range'.

  The unit gains an extra saving dice vs missile fire.
- Speed (Wind element) – Rapid fire:

  Each base fires at +1 dice. At the end of the firing phase, the unit is disrupted.
- Passing Fire:

  A cavalry unit may make a full move, and fire at any point of the move.
- Cunning (Water element) – Skirmish:

  The unit gains one extra saving dice vs missile fire, but conversely their targets gain +1 saving dice vs the skirmishers.

  If an enemy unit attempts to charge, the skirmishers may evade back by one full move if the controlling player pays one extra order chit. Enemies that charge and fail to contact will become disordered. Skirmishers take a penalty of -1 dice in melee.
- Skirmishing Cavalry:

  Cavalry units armed with bows can be ordered to skirmish. If an enemy unit attempts to charge, the skirmishers may evade back by one full move if the controlling player pays one extra order chit. Enemies that charge and fail to contact will become disordered.

### Movement Activations

- Command chit: The unit may perform a standard move. This can include a charge if wished.
- Ferocity (Fire element) – Ferocious charge:

  The unit will fight against its target gaining a bonus of +1 dice per base.

  If the unit should fail the ensuing melee, the unit will take one additional casualty per base.
- Prudence (Wood element) – Reserves:

  If the unit engages in melee this turn, it is not disordered at the end of combat.
- Discipline (Earth element): Cavalry do not gain a +1 advantage when attacking infantry who use this order.
- Speed (Wind element) – Swift move:

  The unit moves with great speed, running/cantering. The unit moves three additional D.U.s
- Cunning (Water element) – Wedge or tight column attack:

  A unit that charges an enemy line in wedge/attack column formation does not count as flanked by overlapping bases on either side of its points of contact.

  Wedges/attack columns are vulnerable to enemy fire. Units that make opportunity fire against them gain +1 attack dice.

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# Retreat Hell!

During the first Imjin war in Korea, Japanese forces have sacked a town, running a murderous riot through the blazing ruins.

A fleeing force of militia have rallied about the remnants of a royal banner regiment. Now this scratch force of defenders tries to block the road as Japanese invaders surge forth from the blazing town and rampage towards them.

*Terrain notes: The town is currently ablaze. Any units inside the town take damage as per the game's rules. Smoke is currently rising straight into the air. But roll 1D6 at the start of each turn. If a '6' is rolled, the smoke hangs low for the rest of the game. Smoke will spread in a band the width of the town, spreading 5 base widths north per turn. Units cannot draw a line of sight for missile fire through more than a base width of smoke.*

The gates of a Japanese castle are a vulnerable point – but also a position of danger for the attackers! (Perry Miniatures)

# Korean Forces

Bold defenders of the dynasty!

*Ryu*

Metal (Endurance) 1, Wood (Prudence) 3, Water (Cunning) 3, Earth (Discipline) 3, Wind (Speed) 2

One Commander in Chief – Mounted: 2 points

One Leader – Mounted: 14 points

One Hero – Rocket launcher: 8 points

One Hero: 6 points

Four Noble Cavalry: Heavy armour, Training level 3, Bow: 11 points each

Four Noble Cavalry: Heavy armour, Training level 3, Yari: 11 points each

Four Light Horse Archers: No armour, Training level 3, Bow: 8 points each

Four Royal Banner Troops: Heavy armour, Training level 3, Yari: 8 points each

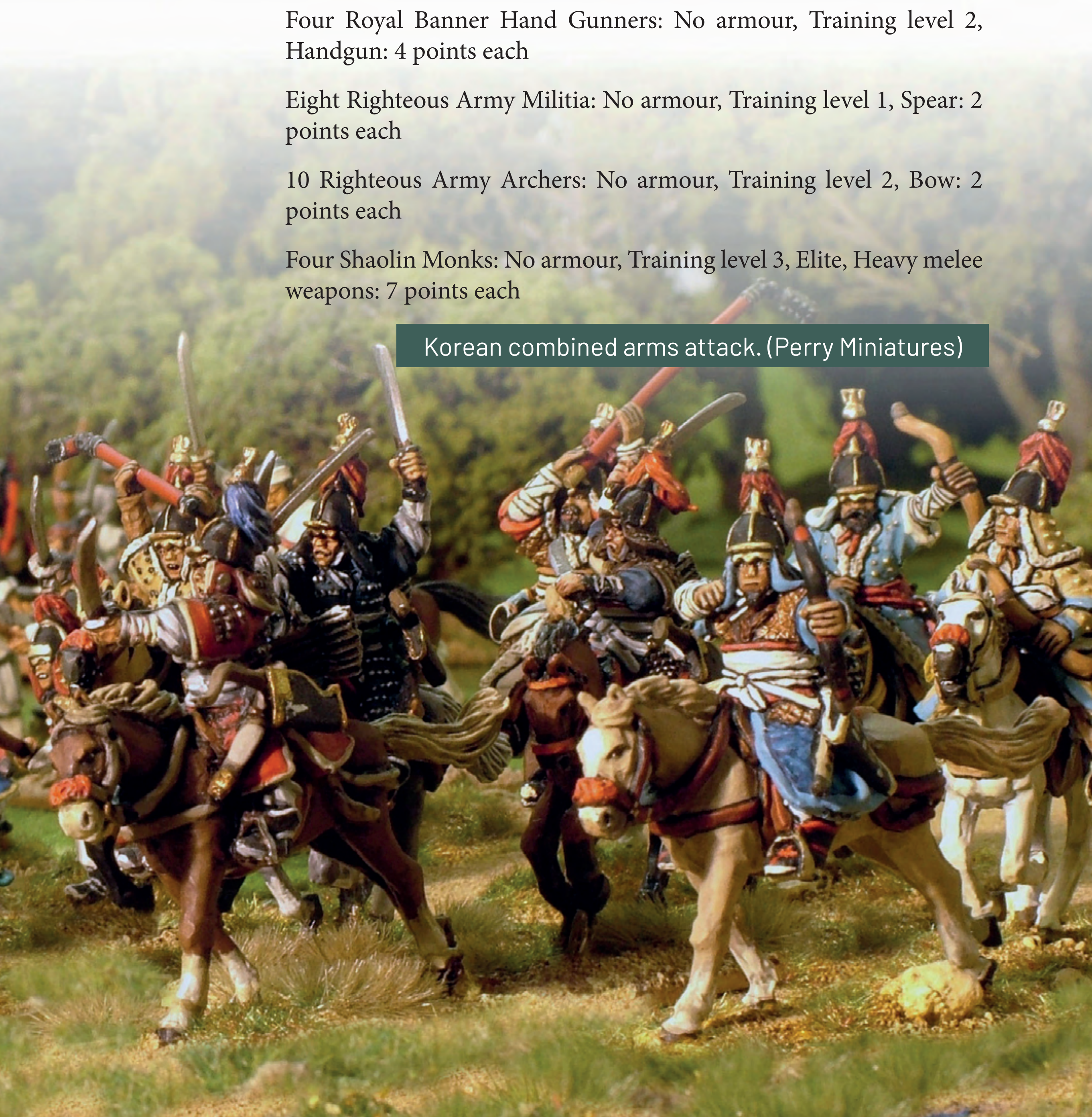
Four Royal Banner Archers: No armour, Training level 3, Bow (1 volley of fire arrow): 4 points each

Four Royal Banner Hand Gunners: No armour, Training level 2, Handgun: 4 points each

Eight Righteous Army Militia: No armour, Training level 1, Spear: 2 points each

10 Righteous Army Archers: No armour, Training level 2, Bow: 2 points each

Four Shaolin Monks: No armour, Training level 3, Elite, Heavy melee weapons: 7 points each



Korean combined arms attack. (Perry Miniatures)

# Samurai Forces

Ferocious invaders!

*Ryu*

Metal (Endurance) 3, Fire (Ferocity) 4, Earth (Discipline) 3, Wind (Speed) 2

One Commander in Chief – Mounted: 2 points

One Leader – Mounted: 14 points

Three Heroes: 6 points each

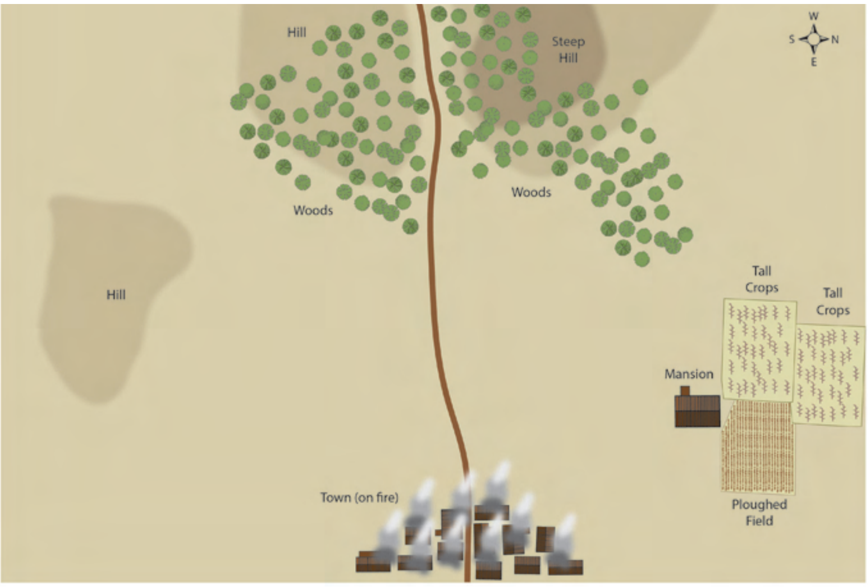
Four Shock Cavalry: Heavy armour, Training level 3, Yari: 11 points each

Four Samurai Foot: Heavy armour, Training level 3, Elite, Yari: 10 points each

Four Samurai Gunners: Heavy armour, Training level 3, Samurai-zutsu: 11 points each

Four Ashigaru spearmen: Light armour, Training level 2, Yari: 4 points each

Eight Ashigaru gunners: Light armour, Training level 3, Ban-zutsu: 8 points each


W
S
N
E
Hill
Steep Hill
Woods
Woods
Hill
Tall Crops
Tall Crops
Mansion
Ploughed Field
Town (on fire)

# Action in the Philippines

Japanese pirates have landed in a cove some distance from a Spanish trading base at a Philippine port. The warehouses are full of treasure – but the garrison has been alerted!

Pirates start on the northern side of the table. The Spanish may deploy anywhere on the southern table edge, or in the town.

Clan troops heading out on campaign. The long road beckons! (Perry Miniatures)

# Wokou (pirate) Forces

Yarrrrr!

*Ryu*

Metal (Endurance) 2, Fire (Ferocity) 4, Water (Cunning) 4, Wind (Speed) 2

One Commander in Chief: Free

One Leader: 12 points

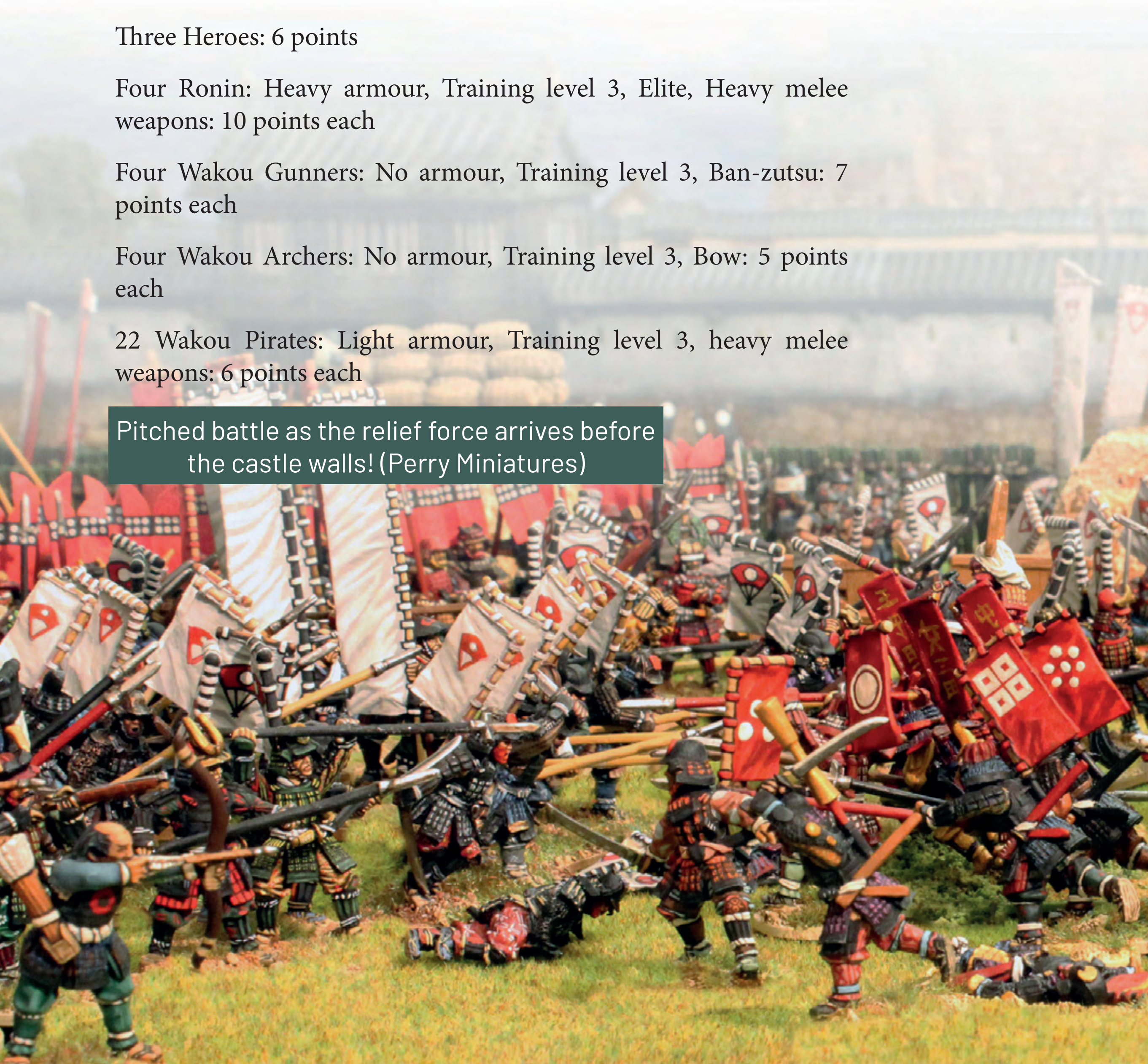
Three Heroes: 6 points

Four Ronin: Heavy armour, Training level 3, Elite, Heavy melee weapons: 10 points each

Four Wakou Gunners: No armour, Training level 3, Ban-zutsu: 7 points each

Four Wakou Archers: No armour, Training level 3, Bow: 5 points each

22 Wakou Pirates: Light armour, Training level 3, heavy melee weapons: 6 points each



Pitched battle as the relief force arrives before the castle walls! (Perry Miniatures)

# Spanish Forces

Servants of the crown (lightly sun-baked)

*Ryu*

Metal (Endurance) 3, Fire (Ferocity) 3, Water (Cunning) 3, Earth (Discipline) 3

One Commander in Chief: Free

Two Leaders: 12 points each

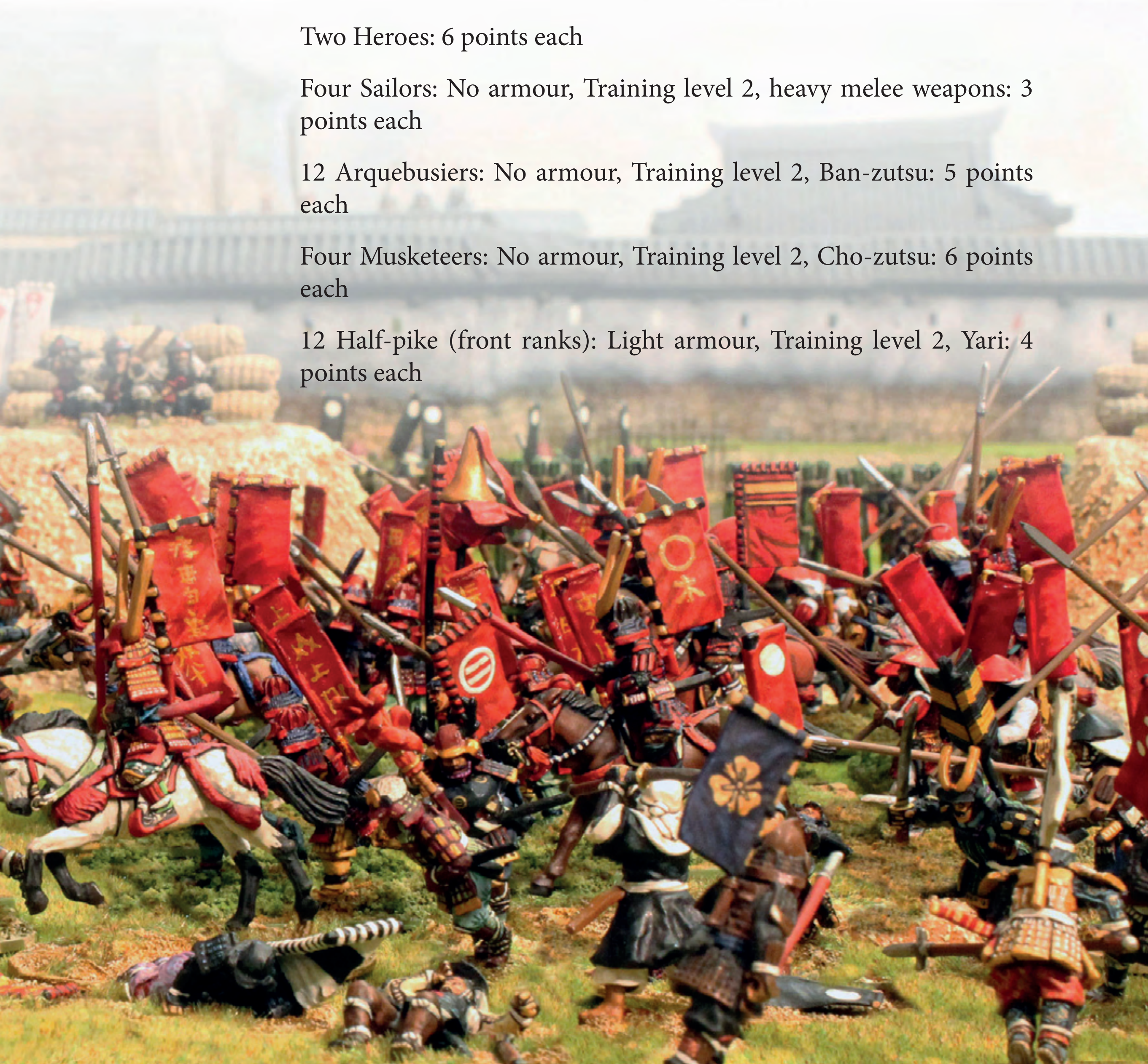
Two Heroes: 6 points each

Four Sailors: No armour, Training level 2, heavy melee weapons: 3 points each

12 Arquebusiers: No armour, Training level 2, Ban-zutsu: 5 points each

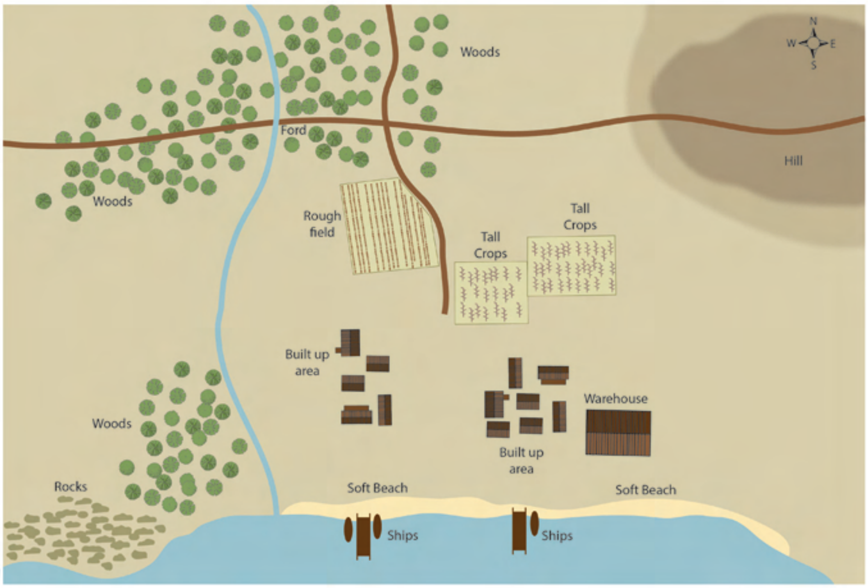
Four Musketeers: No armour, Training level 2, Cho-zutsu: 6 points each

12 Half-pike (front ranks): Light armour, Training level 2, Yari: 4 points each



12 Half-pike (rear ranks): No armour, Training level 2, Yari: 5 points each

Four Sword & Buckler Men: Heavy armour, Training level 3, elite, heavy melee weapons: 10 points each


N
W
E
S
Woods
Ford
Woods
Hill
Rough field
Tall Crops
Tall Crops
Built up area
Warehouse
Woods
Built up area
Rocks
Soft Beach
Soft Beach
Ships
Ships

"Even if it seems certain that you will lose, retaliate. Neither wisdom nor technique has a place in this. A real man does not think of victory or defeat. He plunges recklessly towards an irrational death. By doing this, you will awaken from your dreams."
Yamamoto Tsunetomo: Hagakure (The Book of Falling Leaves)
(Perry Miniatures)

The later Sengoku period is the era of warfare depicted in classical Japanese movies such as *The Seven Samurai*, *Ran*, and *Kagemusha* – a colourful period that has a very distinct difference in the arms, equipment, tactics and culture from that seen in Europe at the time. It is a period that sees the dominance of firearms in warfare, and the evolution of increasingly complex small-unit tactical systems. But there still remained a heroic ethos, where leaders and the bearers of age-old honoured names would still try to seek out worthy adversaries to battle blade-to-blade.

While massive armies did meet and clash, such encounters were surprisingly rare. The endemic warfare of the period was dominated by raids, small battles, incursions, and the clash of clan warbands. Small families battled one another for local regional dominance, seeking the leverage to become major powers. Meanwhile, firearms and armour improved in an increasingly lethal arms race.

*Bushidan* allows players to control the forces of samurai families, ikko-ikki covenants, pirates, bandits and warrior monks – or even forces engaged against the Japanese of the era such as the Ming Chinese and Joseon Koreans. The game focuses on the small-unit tactical systems that were developing to meet the demands of the new age of warfare. Players must plan their tactical 'box of tricks' with care, and choose the ferocity, style and cunning that their forces will bring to the battlefield. The game includes a campaign system to allow players to pit their Bushidan against one another in longer conflicts.

This is a colourful period for wargamers to paint and to model. The rules are intended for use with 28mm figures but can easily be played with smaller scale, and a typical army might have 8 or 9 units, each of 4 to 16 figures each.

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